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Brazil woes spur concerns about US economy

By CAREN BOHAN

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Currency turmoil in Brazil raised fresh concerns yesterday about a sharp slowing in the US economy, which so far has shown astonishing resilience in the face of financial woes that have swept the globe.

Recession in Brazil was seen as all but inevitable even before the devaluation of the real currency, whose stability had been the linchpin of the country's recovery from

years of hyperinflation. A downturn in Latin America's largest economy will further dampen export business for US manufacturers, who already have seen sales to battered Asian countries plummet.

But even more worrisome was the prospect that Brazil's woes could spread to other Latin American countries and to Mexico, causing US exporters' troubles to mount, economists said.

US stocks fell yesterday due to

Brazil's devaluation of its currency. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 125.12 points, after falling 145 points Tuesday.

"The immediate and direct impact of Brazil on the US economy is relatively small," said Clyde Prestowitz, head of the Economic Strategy Institute think tank. "But it has big implications for the rest of Latin America, and because of that it has big implications for the United States."

Prestowitz noted that with Japan,

the world's second-largest economy, in a slump and many emerging economies suffering, the world can

Brazilian real plummets, Page 13

ill afford a major slowdown in the US economy, which is an engine of global growth.

The events in Brazil were the latest flare-up of a global financial cri-

sis, which started a year and a half ago in Asia.

The crisis has left much of Asia mired in sluggishness and Russia's economy in tatters.

It rocked US financial markets in August and September, causing lending activity to freeze up for a brief period and dealing a short setback to the soaring US stock market.

The US manufacturing sector, which has been hemorrhaging jobs since early this year, has clearly

shown the effects of the global crisis.

But to the bewilderment of many economists, the US economy overall has been thriving. Flush with cash from a strong job market and a booming stock market, consumers have been on a spending spree and have more than picked up the slack for faltering export sales.

The US unemployment rate is now at 4.3 percent, its lowest level in nearly three decades. And the eight-year US economic expansion

recently surpassed the 1980s expansion as the second-longest period of unbroken growth in the post-World War II era.

Richard Berner, chief economist at Mellon Bank in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, said it was possible that Brazil's problems could precipitate the sort of crisis that would send stocks lower, but the fact that many investors had been prepared for a devaluation has softened the immediate blow from yesterday's events.



Labor Party leader Ehud Barak consults with MK Shimon Peres at the party convention in Tel Aviv last night. (Hani Ossendyev/Israel Sun)

Barak ignores Labor strife

Safe-seat plan to face vote today

By LIAT COLLINS

Under a poster reading, "Barak for everyone and not for the extremists," Labor Party leader Ehud Barak last night opened what should have been a festive, two-day party convention in Tel Aviv.

But the day after MK Hagai Merom left Labor for Amnon Lipkin-Shahak's centrist party, claiming Barak had turned the party into a "one-man show," the star of the event chose to focus on the fight against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He ignored the internal struggles which are likely to come to the fore today, when the convention has to vote on adopting the system of electing its Knesset list. This includes the four safe seats that Barak has personally reserved and others reserved for

women, minorities, and immigrants.

Before Barak climbed on to the stage, he spent a full six minutes shaking hands and hugging party members. His speech was repeatedly interrupted by chants of "Bibi go home," and he received the loudest applause when he accused Netanyahu of selling out to the Palestinians.

"Bibi divides Jerusalem every day... you Netanyahu have brought about a Palestinian state and you brought [President Bill] Clinton to it."

MK Shimon Peres boasted that the party had filled the hall with 3,000 activists, but a week before Likud could only muster 300.

But the real story was backstage, or at least in the audience, where disaffected MKs sat stony-faced

waiting for a response. The safe slots reserved for Barak threaten senior MKs who feel their chances of a cabinet seat in a Labor-led government are disappearing, while the primary election system threatens to oust junior MKs altogether.

MK Haim Ramon, who is still considering his future in the party, spoke with Barak several times before the convention opening. Afterward, Barak met with party members to try to reach a compromise on the primary system and the reserved slot issue.

If all the reserved spots are used, only three places in the top 10 are available to the current MKs and only four in the next 10. At least 15 senior MKs are competing for these seven places.

See BARAK, Page 2

Sharon foresees Palestinian state

By DANA HANAN

Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, for the first time, was quoted yesterday as saying he could envision the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Sharon, who is in Paris to meet with French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, was quoted — in a *Le Monde* interview published yesterday — as saying: "Autonomy will lead to a Palestinian state," when asked, "Yes or no, can you envisage the principle of a Palestinian state?"

In the interview, released by his spokesman, Sharon also reiterated his position that any outcome can only be reached through negotiations, and that if the Palestinians unilaterally declare a state on May

4, Israel will annex all the territories still under its control.

"There is no question of our trying to recover Gaza, Nabulus, or Jenin," Sharon was quoted as saying. "But all the rest that is in our hands today will remain so."

Speaking later at the IFRIL institute, Sharon, according to his spokesman, clarified that when he had alluded to a future Palestinian state, he did not mean a complete state in the usual understanding of the term.

"Even if, at the end of a period of negotiations, an autonomous state were to be born, it would have heavy restrictions applied to it," he said.

Sharon gave several examples of the sort of restrictions he expects will be imposed on the future enti-

ty, including a cap on the size of its armed forces and a restriction of the types of arms they will be able to hold.

Sharon talked about the necessary of Israel approving military pacts signed by the Palestinians with third parties, especially those hostile to Israel, the necessity of allowing Israel to overfly Palestinian air space, and the need to impose conditions on Palestinian economic pacts and behavior.

For example, Sharon said, a situation whereby Israel and the Palestinian state would have open borders and the Palestinians would declare themselves a customs-free area would be untenable.

See SHARON, Page 2

Fatal W. Bank shoot-out

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Two Israelis were wounded last night, one gravely, when Palestinian gunmen fired at them near Otzlet in the southern Hebron Hills.

Israel Radio reported that in a subsequent shoot-out, one gunman was killed, a second wounded, and a third fled the scene and was being pursued.

The attack occurred shortly after 10 p.m. at the Dahaniya Junction on Route 60, about 2 kilometers from Otzlet, said Amir Kilron, deputy head of the Mount Hebron Regional Council.

One of the Israelis wounded was transferred by helicopter to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba.

Shahak waits for his dynamic duo

ANALYSIS

By SARAH MONIE

The pizzazz seems to be fizzling out of the Amnon Lipkin-Shahak drive.

At least this is what the most recent polls are indicating — and the polls, after all, were what propelled him to center stage in the first place.

The consensus among Shahak boosters and knockers is that he needs a lift — better yet two lifts.

He must recruit Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to his right and Labor's Haim Ramon to his left.

His trouble is that nothing much can be said for sure about either, except that anything is possible.

For now, Mordechai and Ramon are carefully watching each other, waiting to see what

the other will do and not making a move till then.

It would be safer for Ramon to bet on Shahak if he knew a heavyweight like Mordechai is backing him, and Mordechai is keeping his eyes peeled on Ramon, thinking exactly the same.

This could go on forever if the two did not have to mind the ticking party clocks. They do not have unlimited time.

Mordechai must make his choice by the end of the month, because the Likud Knesset list

gets picked on February 8. He can't dither much longer before putting his name on the ballot.

For Ramon, the deadline has unexpectedly been moved to the Labor Party's convention today.

Only last weekend he thought there was no rush. He was invited to a closed caucus with party chief Ehud Barak, Yossi Beilin, and Shlomo Ben-Ami.

They discussed the primaries, but Barak put one over on his interlocutors.

He did not tell them he planned to reserve four safe slots on the party list and an unspecified number of additional slots on the Labor-led One Israel bloc he envisions.

See SHAHAK, Page 4

Michael Jordan announces retirement

CHICAGO (Reuters) — Michael Jordan announced his retirement from professional basketball yesterday, ending an unmatched and magical playing career that shattered records and awed fans worldwide.

"I am here to announce my retirement," he told a news conference on the basketball court of Chicago's United Center not far from a soaring bronze statue of Jordan in flight that carries an inscription few would dispute: "The Best There Ever Was. The Best There Ever Will Be."

Unlike his earlier, temporary retirement in 1993 when he left the game for a stint in professional baseball, Jordan said this decision was final.

He announced no specific future

plans other than to spend more time with his family, and to remain in Chicago.

"Being a parent is very challenging... and I welcome that challenge," he said of his children. He said he would live "vicariously" through his children if they play basketball, "or if they don't."

In walking away from the game after 13 seasons and at the age of 35, Jordan leaves behind six NBA championships for the Chicago Bulls, 10 scoring titles, a stack of most valuable player crowns and unforgettable memories of dead-on shots in an airborne ballet that defied gravity and the best defenses the game could throw at him.

In addition to making a fortune on the court — his paycheck for last season was \$33 million — Jordan became a twinkling, one-man commercial marketing machine for products ranging from sneakers to batteries.

Fortune Magazine once estimated his marketing prowess added \$10 billion to the world economy.

Jordan's legacy — Page 20

US pollster burglary stumps police

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON — District of Columbia police reported no progress yesterday in solving the break-in at a local polling company that is employed by Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak.

Federal Bureau of Investigation officials confirmed that the police invited them to assist in the case because of the possible international connection, but deferred the case to Washington law enforcement authorities.

"The case is being handled as a local crime," said Susan Lloyd, a spokeswoman for the FBI's local field office. "Our role is to assist in the processing and analysis of the evidence. The Metropolitan [Washington] Police Department yesterday contacted us and asked us to assist them in the collection and processing of the evidence. At



Stanley Greenberg (Israel Hagi)

this point in time, there is no evidence of a federal criminal violation."

According to a source who has spoken with the top management of Greenberg Quinn Research Inc., the burglary victim, several computer diskettes and some petty cash were taken by the intruder or intruders between late Monday and early Tuesday.

Not another Watergate, Page 2

The diskettes contained questionnaires and polls that were being prepared for use in Barak's election campaign.

Barak recently hired the firm's founder, Stanley Greenberg, along with political image specialist Robert Schrum and political strategist James Carville, as consultants on his campaign. The three met with the candidate in Israel last month.

Greenberg, who worked for President Clinton in the 1992 campaign and later in the White House, was in London when the burglary occurred and returned to Washington early yesterday.

No police were present outside the company's Capitol Hill office yesterday, but Greenberg's home nearby is reportedly under guard.

Steve Rabinowitz, a Democratic consultant, said he and Greenberg Quinn officials, with whom he spoke, have no reason to believe the theft was orchestrated by Barak's opponents, and said they hope that no sinister motives were involved.

See BURGLARY, Page 4

Clinton breaks public silence on trial

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — President Bill Clinton said yesterday he trusted the Senate would do the "right thing" in his impeachment trial in US history. A two-thirds vote would be required for Clinton's removal from office, which few expect the Senate to muster.

The House last month approved two articles of impeachment against Clinton on largely party-line votes, charging perjury in his August 17 grand jury testimony and obstruction of justice in his efforts to conceal his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

Clinton still plans to deliver the State of the Union address as scheduled for Tuesday, although the trial will be continuing.

Americans wanted to hear what he had to say about policy and had heard enough about Lewinsky, he said.

"I think the American people have heard about that quite extensively over the last year. My understanding is that I should do their business," Clinton said.

the people."

The House prosecutors will begin opening arguments today in only the second presidential impeachment trial in US history. A two-thirds vote would be required for Clinton's removal from office, which few expect the Senate to muster.

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NEWS

in brief

IAF strike in Lebanon

Air Force fighter jets yesterday bombed Hizbullah targets in south Lebanon, striking for the fifth time so far this year. The warplanes targeted key crossing points which the IDF believes are used by Hizbullah guerrillas to sneak into the security zone.

One target was the Zelaya valley, in the western Bekaa, and another was just south of the city of Tyre. Later last night they staged another raid this time targeting the Soudj ridge which Hizbullah uses as a launching point for attacks.

The air raids came after South Lebanese Army militiamen detected a large booby trap made up of seven bombs on a road near the village of Markaba. The bombs planted about a kilometer from the border, had been set to go off simultaneously. SLA sappers safely detonated them, military sources said.

Arieh O'Sullivan

New inquiry into 1996 commandos disaster

Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz has ordered a fresh - third - inquiry into the deaths of 12 Navy commandos who were apparently ambushed and killed while on a mission at Ansariyah in Lebanon in September 1996, according to the newsletter *Foreign Report*.

Two previous inquiries attributed the deaths of the Flotilla 13 commandos to bad luck, the London-based newsletter reported.

It says Israeli military sources have insisted that Hizbullah had no part in the disaster and that it was pure coincidence that servicemen were killed by explosives on a dirt track, one of many criss-crossing citrus-banana plantations along the Lebanese coast where nobody would normally think of posting guards, let alone lay mines.

Douglas Davis

24 arrested for throwing stones

Police last night arrested 24 Arab teenagers for throwing stones and empty bottles at border policemen in Jerusalem. One border policeman was lightly injured in the leg, Jerusalem police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby said.

Amir Klein

Sneh: IDF not prepared for questions on mishap

Ephraim Sneh (Labor), chairman of the Knesset subcommittee investigating the "friendly fire" accident in which St. Sgt. Ohad Zach was killed, suspended a session Tuesday shortly after it began, citing the failure of the IDF representative to have come prepared to answer his questions. The committee is to meet again in coordination with the IDF.

Nina Gilbert and Arieh O'Sullivan

Man charged with raping mental patients

David Zada, 65, of Holon, who has the kiosk concession at Abarbanel Psychiatric Hospital in Bat Yam, was indicted yesterday in Tel Aviv District Court on charges of raping and sodomizing patients at the hospital.

Zada would allegedly take different patients into his kiosk and rape or sexually assault them there. His last offense was committed at the end of December. The prosecution said it has video tapes of his crimes, taken by a hidden camera in the kiosk.

Zada was released to house arrest on NIS 7,500 bail, and has been banned from entering Bat Yam until the end of the trial.

Tim

Free French veteran who fought for Israel dies

Raymond Kwort, a colorful veteran of Gen. Charles de Gaulle's wartime Free French forces who later fought for Israel in the War of Independence, died in Paris yesterday, his family said. He was 78.

Born in France of Lithuanian Jewish immigrant parents, the teenage Kwort slipped aboard a ship taking Polish troops to Britain from France as it fell to Nazi troops in June 1940. Kwort joined the French DST counter-espionage service after the war, but quit to fight as a volunteer for Israel.

He served as a captain in the Seventh Mechanized Brigade, mostly in Galilee. A decorated Gaullist, Kwort, who long ran a photo laboratory specializing in medical subjects, was active against the Secret Army Organization (OAS) which sought to kill de Gaulle and keep Algeria in French hands in the early 1960s.

Reuters

In deep sorrow we mourn the passing of ARTHUR (Avraham) LIEDER

In Monsey, NY
In mourning in Monsey, NY:
Children: Rivka Weg, Jean Adler and Dr. Joseph Lieder
In Jerusalem: Sister, Doris Goldsmith (Skokie, South Bend)
Brother, Gerald Lieder (formerly of Baltimore, MD)
Shiva until Monday morning, January 18, at 22 Reh. Pinsker, Apt. 1
Minyan: 6:30 a.m., 4:45 p.m.

Our sincere condolences to our good friend David J. Zwiebel and the family on the passing of his mother

ESTELLE GARBER 77

May you know no further sorrow.

Laurie and Jordan Stone,
Norfolk, Virginia, USA

We mourn the passing of ESTELLE GARBER 77

mother of our associate
David J. Zwiebel

Harbor Group International, Norfolk, Virginia, USA
Bo-Da Investment Ltd., Ramat Gan
Management and co-workers

With great sorrow we mourn the passing of our beloved husband, father and grandfather

Prof. PAUL GOULD

Estelle Gould
Lisa, Eli, Moshe, Nomi
and Yehuda Okon
Joanna, Gil and Ilana Stuart

Shiva at the Gould residence, 4 Gan Rehavia,
Jerusalem. Tel. 625-5870

On the shloshim of the death of ERYK SPECTOR

Member of the International Board, New York
we extend heartfelt condolences to his dear wife Mira,
children and grandchildren.

MENACHEM BEGIN HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Yechiel Kadishai
Chairman
Harry Hurwitz
Director

Barak not fazed by break-in at adviser's Washington office

By LIAT COLLINS

Labor Party leader Ehud Barak does not intend changing his campaign strategy because of the break-in at the offices of his Washington adviser Stanley Greenberg, despite apparent tampering with research files relating to the Israeli campaign.

The break-in did result in mutual recrimination. MK Ori Orr (Labor) told reporters, "Although I have no proof, the chief contender for something like this is one of Netanyahu's people." In response Likud spokeswoman Ronit Eckstein said Orr "suffers from defective thinking. His hatred of his political rival, like his hatred of the Sephardim, has driven him out of his mind."

Although the incident was quickly dubbed "Israel's Watergate," Barak's campaign manager Tal Silberstein was cautious as police here have not yet been involved in the inquiry, he said.

Silberstein said the burglars apparently went directly to the international accounts including the Israeli file. He also noted, "As I understand it, the leak to the media [in Washington] was through a strange announcement carried out in the name of a Jewish group which intends harming Barak's campaign." Greenberg is in Europe but in close contact with Israel. Barak's campaign is apparently the only one Greenberg is currently handling in the international arena.

Silberstein said material on Barak's campaign strategy was not taken and there was no concern that this material could reach a political rival. The data apparently



Washington police investigating the break-in at the offices of Stanley Greenberg, a polling adviser who is working on Ehud Barak's election campaign (AP)

taken includes research material and polls which could reveal target audiences for the campaign.

Silberstein said, "Even if the worst has happened, the campaign won't be changed as it deals with real issues. We are not scared and I don't believe it will harm Barak's chances." Silberstein declined to

guess what the burglars were seeking, "but whoever entered the account knew what they were looking for." He said the circumstances of the break-in were not clear. "On the one hand, it was a professional break-in but on the other, there was an amateurish scattering of evidence."

Silberstein said Barak's US advisers are concerned because this has never happened to them before despite handling election campaigns around the world. Silberstein said he heard that media adviser James Carville had even asked if he should provide protection for his family.

If Barak was the target of the break-in it would be the first known incident of this kind in Israeli elections. Observers yesterday noted that when Benjamin Netanyahu came to power classified computerized material on his social security file in the US was leaked to the Israeli press.

Not Another Watergate

ANALYSIS

By SAM LEHMAN-WITZIG

If one assumes for the moment the absolute worst - the break-in and theft of Labor leader Ehud Barak's strategic campaign material in Washington was the work of his political rivals - the outcome almost certainly would not be similar to Nixon's Watergate.

The reason has to do with the level of expected election campaign morality in Israel as opposed to the United States. Notwithstanding several highly publicized campaign scandals in the US, the American rules of electoral combat are far more delineated than those in Israel.

Witness Al Gore's problems with the campaign finance law because he made calls from the White House! Has anyone ever charged an Israeli Cabinet Minister with a similar transgression of illegally using public property?

Moreover, Israel has a long-standing tradition of overlooking the seamer side of "intelligence work" in the field of national security; the

spillover to politics is a small step for a society which views its politics in terms of Armageddon. Indeed, here is the crux of the matter.

With national security the central issue of every campaign, all sides view the battle for the ballot box in terms of "the ends justify the means."

What's a minor break-in (several thousand miles away, no less!) when what's at stake is the very future of the country? This is not meant as a justification of such wrongful derring-do - but as long as Israeli elections continue to be existential, it is hard to see many Israelis getting overly worked up over some theft where "no one was even injured."

And that's the absolute worst case scenario. But while our Prime Minister may have been called many things, "stupid" is not one of them.

Who if not he (American educated) knows what Watergate did to Nixon?

Being part of any such conspiracy is simply incomprehensible, a gigantic risk with minor gain for a leader already on the ropes due to alleged untrustworthiness and consistent prevarication.

The Labor Party would be wise to ignore this event until the FBI finds the culprits and those behind them (if any). They should forget Watergate and concentrate on the real election battle ahead - perhaps the present government's Waterloo.

Prof. Sam Lehman-Witzig teaches in Bar-Ilan University's Department of Political Studies. He is currently the Chairman of the Israel Political Science Association.

SHARON

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, in Israel, visiting US envoy Dennis Ross continued his talks with government and Palestinian officials, meeting with both Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Mohammed Dahlan, head of Preventive Security in Gaza.

In a separate development, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry said that had Sharon known the visiting Greek deputy foreign minister had held a meeting in the Orient House, he would not have met with him.

"Such a meeting in Orient House goes against the clear policy we have been outlining these past two years and is a serious infringement of agreements reached with the Palestinians," said the spokesman.

Sharon further warned the PA

that if they hold political meetings at Orient House, the government will "respond very seriously."

Nina Gilbert adds:

The government cannot back a bill by MK Hanan Porat (National Religious Party), according to which Israel would annex Areas B and C if the Palestinian Authority unilaterally declares a state. Deputy Minister Michael Eitan, the government's liaison to the Knesset, said yesterday.

However, Eitan said he hopes discussions can be held with Porat on reaching an agreed version.

In the preliminary discussion of the bill, Porat said that Israel "is holding assets that are not just real estate, but true national and Jewish treasures and, with these assets, should say openly to the Palestinian Authority: If you declare a Palestinian state in those enclaves you have, you will turn it into a minuscule state that has no real resemblance to a state."

BARAK

Continued from Page 1

Ignoring this, Barak gave a pure election address. He used slogans stressing socio-economic issues and only dealt with security issues as a means of achieving socio-economic goals.

He stressed the problems of unemployment, poverty, the crisis in the health system, and several times used images of a crying child.

"This government will fall because of the tears of a child on his pillow at night - and another child and another child and another child, whose homes have been destroyed in front of their eyes."

Like Netanyahu at the Likud convention earlier this week, Barak did not relate to Shahak at all.

On security and diplomatic issues, Barak laid down his red lines: a united Jerusalem as sovereign capital; no return to 1967 borders; no foreign army to the west of the Jordan River; and "most" settlements remaining in place, in blocs, under Israeli sovereignty.

"Only this peace will allow the economy to flourish and allow for

a new set of priorities," Barak said. "We will bring about a physical separation between us and the Palestinians, we here and them there, to bring about neighborliness and mutual respect."

He accused Netanyahu and government of being blind to what he said is the greater danger from the Iranian and Iraqi nuclear programs, while concentrating on the extra guns held by the Palestinians.

"I tell you no one will teach me what security is nor the fight against terror, not even reserve officer Netanyahu," Barak said.

In his televised response, Netanyahu said the government had fallen because Labor made an alliance with the extremists instead of providing a political safety net for the Wye agreement. He said Barak, in effect, had backed a Palestinian state and added that Orient House had flourished under the previous government.

On social issues, he said his government had added 1,200 hospital beds despite the budget deficit it inherited from Labor, and he jibed at Barak for not being able to manage his own party's finances.

David Zev Harris contributed to this report.

Burglars steal Barak's notes

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - It was easy, too easy perhaps. In the alley behind Greenberg Quinlan

Research Inc., mere centimeters from the building, stands a three-story wooden telephone pole, with its slightly hooked metal steps jutting out so repairmen can access

the wires strung above.

But sometime between Monday night and Tuesday morning, one or more burglars likely used the pole to reach the enclosed balcony on the roof, from where they cut down into the second floor and made away with what the company said was information it compiled on behalf of their best-known international client, Labor Party leader Ehud Barak.

Two television-station trucks with their teltale satellite dishes camped out early yesterday on Second Street, Northeast, along with a handful of reporters. Neighbors strolled by on the quiet street, doing double-takes at the small crowd but continuing on without inquiry. There were no yellow police ropes or squad cars discharging officers to carry out their investigation.

The area hardly resembles the posh Watergate complex across town, scene of one of history's most infamous break-ins more than a quarter-century ago. It is a neighborhood of orderly, old brick townhouses that line the Capitol Hill streets bisecting bustling Massachusetts Avenue, an area workers and residents consider safe during both day and night. Although it is just two blocks from the Senate office buildings, the scene does not easily lend itself to international intrigue.

Inside the white-bricked Greenberg Quinlan offices, it was a normal workday, with none of the commotion of Tuesday, when the forced entry was discovered.

Employees would not come out to talk. A window overlooking the back alley was open, albeit behind metal bars.

Out front, a large green plant dominated the company's inside window. Beneath the floral silhouette appeared a sticker common in urban neighborhoods, but it was a notice that evidently served no deterrent capacity this time.

"This property protected by Southern Property Services," it read.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our dearest

ISRAEL NATZOR

Mourners: his wife Dita Natzor
his brother Michael and Miriam Zori
his sister Miriam Danieli
and Groag and Talmi families

NOACH AMINADAV BENTOVIM

passed away in Los Angeles
on January 12, 1999.

Deeply mourned by his beloved wife Grace, sister Ruth Gordon (Nofei Hasharon, Netanya) and nices: Zeva Friedman, Nava Hellerstein, Tamara Rabinowitz, and their families.

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of our dearest

SAMUEL PANCER

Funeral today, January 14, 1999,
at Hayarkon Cemetery at 1:45 p.m.

Pancer and Moses families

Ministry of the Interior Bid No. 42/98

Request for Proposal (RFP) Extension of Deadline

Further to the announcement of December 31, 1998, the Ministry of the Interior hereby extends the period for purchasing the RFP for the preparation of a Comprehensive Integrated National Outline Scheme for Water Management: Use, Treatment and Regulation.

This RFP is intended for those interested in submitting a detailed work plan proposal, according to the RFP specifications, that may be purchased for a NIS 600 fee from Mr. Shalom Terabetsi, Director of Facilities, Ministry of the Interior, Kiryat Ben Gurion, 2 Kaplan Street, Room 105, Jerusalem, until January 25, 1999 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The proposal must be submitted in Hebrew in a sealed envelope.

The final date for submission is March 1, 1999 until 12 noon.

There are no other changes to the conditions of the tender.

1550 من الأصل

-in
fice

Dimona politely rejects Meridor

By DANIEL HARMAN

The main question Dimona residents had for prime ministerial candidate Dan Meridor yesterday was why had he left the Likud? And while Meridor's reception as he began his campaign tour in this Likud stronghold was far from hostile, it was nonetheless clear who the folks there plan to vote for on election day.

"You haven't a chance," a shoe vendor in the souk told Meridor matter-of-factly.

"Come back home," suggested a fruit merchant as he shook Meridor's hand.

"Only Bibi [Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu], y'all a few passersby."

"What's wrong with Bibi anyway? He's a liar? Big deal," said a CD salesman.

Besides yelling out Netanyahu's attributes, the Dimona vendors had some other things to say to Meridor.

"If you get elected, could you get us some awnings for this souk?" requested one man weighing apricots.

"Ah, the prelection feigned interest in the South," said a citrus salesman.

"Who is that?" asks an elderly Russian immigrant choosing tomatoes.

Meridor, however, is not easily flustered. Speaking in a soft voice, he went from town hall to the souk to a technical college to a textile plant, telling the people of Dimona exactly what he thinks this election campaign is about.

"This is about leadership," he said. "It's about trust, responsibility, and seriousness. There is nothing left in the Likud, it is falling apart, and as hard as we tried, we could not patch it up," he repeats, trying to speak above the din of the theme song from Star Wars, blasting out of the CD stand at full volume.

Earlier, sitting down in the town hall and sipping mint tea with Mayor Gabi Lahusi, Meridor was more explicit.

"Bibi created an economic policy which brought about a slow-down of the market and unemployment and which increased the socio-economic gaps. Yet instead of taking responsibility, he is talking about who is going to divide Jerusalem. I left because there was no other choice."

"Someone needs to take responsibility, otherwise we will find ourselves in a very, very dangerous situation," he later told a half-full auditorium at a technical high school. "My heart aches to leave the party, but although both MKs and ministers felt like me, in the end their seats were more important and they stayed put. I am disappointed, and I had no option but to leave."

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It is unclear whether Meridor's message got across. As he ran from one location to the next, the night shift at the chemical factories and the unemployed sat around the main square, drinking coffee and talking politics. In a town which has absorbed some 10,000 new immigrants in the past few years, but in which no new factories have opened in over 20 years and unemployment tops 11 percent, 72% of the population voted for Netanyahu in the last election. Shimon Peres was booted out of town in 1996.

"Dan is a good guy, but he is not a leader. He speaks to us from the second floor down," said Henri, 55, unemployed, and who, by his own admission, voted for the Likud "six times" in 1996.

"Dan left for personal reasons. What else could it be, that diagonal economic thing? Is that a reason to leave your home? It's no trick to leave when the going gets tough," chimed in Gilbert, who works the night shift at the Dead Sea Industries, and has two unemployed post-army sons living at home.

Voting, the coffee drinkers patiently explained, is not about ideology. "The moment we signed Oslo, that whole ideology story was over," said Gilbert. "The parties are all the same."

So what's the key?

"My dad came by boat from Morocco in the '50s," said Morris, launching into a story most of his mates could tell as their own. "He said he wanted to go Ra'anana because he had family there, but he was thrown here... Before the Likud came to power in 1977, you could live in the middle of the road all day long and never be hit by a car, unless an ambulance came by. We had nothing here before the Likud gave us back our pride."

"Yeah," agreed Henri. "We didn't have cars, or color TV, nothing."

The men related how Labor used to take their fathers "by the hand" to the polling stations and "make them" vote Labor.

"Then we grew up and took over," concluded Morris. "and we won't let anyone lead us anymore. This is about loyalty."

Albert Assaf, the home-grown deputy mayor who seems to know a great majority of the people in town by their first names, kept talking about Meridor's "integrity."

He said the word in accented English, telling the hecklers and the supporters alike that this is what they should be looking for in a leader. He can't, however, find the exact word in the Hebrew political lexicon of the day, and, as such, is talking about a term both unknown and unappreciated.

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It's impossible without the ladies

Prime ministerial candidates (from left) Dan Meridor, Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, Ehud Barak, and Binjamin Netanyahu appear as women in this ad stressing the need for women Knesset candidates in realistic slots distributed yesterday by the Coalition of Women's Organizations for the Advancement of Women in Politics.

Knesset panel fines Sharon for absenteeism

By NINA GILBERT

As if being snubbed by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the US last week wasn't enough, Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon returned home this week to discover that he is now being docked one day's pay for absenteeism from the Knesset.

Sharon is being punished by the Knesset Ethics Committee for his poor attendance in the summer session, but explained that he was busy attending to matters of state and meetings of the security cabinet.

However, the committee decided that Sharon's many responsibilities do not excuse him for missing 25 out of 38 sessions, despite the extra six no-shows permitted ministers.

It was the third time Sharon

has been cited for absenteeism.

The committee also reprimanded Labor's Addisu Massala and Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, who resigned as a Likud MK after his reelection in November. Massala missed 13 sessions, one more than allowed.

Olmert missed 18, saying he was busy with his election campaign.

Because Olmert has since resigned, the committee decided not to take any measures against him.

In conclusion, the committee noted that excuses from MKs that they are busy with other matters are not acceptable, since for this they should use their two days off from the Knesset - Sundays and Thursdays.

Campaigns focus on public housing

By LIAT COLLINS

The public housing issue yesterday became the focus of election struggles involving MKs from at least three parties. Yisrael Ba'Aliya leader and Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky held a press conference in Tel Aviv at which he demanded the prime minister fund housing for 5,000 new immigrants as a condition for his party's support for the 1999 budget.

He also repeated his opposition to the Public Housing Law and accused the prime minister of changing his mind on the issue for populist reasons.

The law, initiated by a group of MKs led by Ran Cohen (Meretz), would allow long-term residents of public housing to buy their homes at a significant discount based on the number of years they have lived there.

Cohen said if the implementation of the law is held up he will appeal to the High Court.

Meanwhile Coalition and Likud Whip Meir Sheetrit, who drew up alternative government proposals with more criteria for the discounts, said the law would harm the weakest sector and reduce the number of available homes for those who need them.

Sharansky said that Netanyahu had told him on Tuesday that he would not yield on the public housing issue but later the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office Moshe Leon had told the Knesset Finance Committee that he would support the Yisrael Ba'Aliya stand.

Sheetrit later stated Netanyahu had never said he would support it.

If Sharansky's demand to freeze it is met, the necessary amendment to the Economics Arrangements Bill will not be made and the law's implementation will be postponed to 2001.

Sharansky and Immigration and Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein (Yisrael Ba'Aliya) told the press conference that the law would use up all public housing reserves.

"I can empathize with the immigrants who arrived 20, 30 or 40 years ago who at long last have the chance to buy their apartments, but I also can empathize with the people who can't buy homes at all," said Sharansky. "When the prime minister decides to open up the belt, it can't be tightened around the necks of the immigrants."

Political observers note that the attack could be partly aimed at attracting voters who might be moving over to the rival immigrant party led by Avigdor Lieberman, Netanyahu's former right-hand man.

Asked about Lieberman's list, Sharansky said, "As industry and Trade Minister I'm in favor of competition. It's good for the consumer."

ON THE RECORD

* I tell you no one will teach me teach me what security is and the fight on terror, not even reserve officer [Binjamin] Netanyahu - Former chief of General Staff and Labor Party leader Ehud Barak.

* When the prime minister decides to open up the belt, it can't be tightened around the necks of the immigrants - Yisrael Ba'Aliya leader Natan Sharansky on Netanyahu's opposition to the Public Housing Law.

Zucker denies he slurred Sarid

MK Dedi Zucker, who this week announced he would challenge Yossi Sarid for the Meretz Party leadership, yesterday denied telling Ma'ariv that Sarid is an arrogant elitist who "scores the Sephardim."

Zucker said the conversation with Ma'ariv was recorded and could show that "these unpardonable words were never ever said."

He said if it was proved otherwise "and these things were said by me about Meretz, it would be necessary for me to immediately leave the party, because it would be illogical and immoral for me to remain in this type of party."

In response, Sarid said that "if he says he didn't say these things, then he didn't say them, but he must ask who put these words into his mouth. I have many weaknesses and faults, but arrogance is not one of them. I speak in my typical style to [all]. I don't have one record for Ashkenazim and one record for Sephardim. I have the same message for all. I don't flatter anyone, and I think that's the opposite of arrogance."

Another new party was born yesterday - Yehudi Morocco Ba'aliya. As its name suggests, it is aimed at immigrants from Morocco and North Africa and is led by 50-year-old Avraham Asulin, who at a press conference yesterday presented a platform challenging the Russian immigrant parties and Shas.

He accused Shas of endangering Israel's existence and said, "I don't know why the General Security Service did not penetrate this type of party."

He said it is anti-Zionist and does not encourage military service. He said Shas is actually Ashkenazi which denies Moroccan Jewish culture and that the religious parties are dividing the country.

Asulin also demanded equal rights with new immigrants, who he accused of taking the jobs of the oldtimers.

"We will set up a party, and if we have to extort the government, we will do it. There's no shame in that."

ELECTION NOTEBOOK

Asulin was almost alone at the press conference but said he had set up 25 branches throughout the country in two weeks.

He appealed on television to King Hassan II of Morocco to donate money to his campaign.

Coalition whip Meir Sheetrit (Likud) said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided against appointing him as finance minister for reasons he wouldn't disclose, he told a group of reporters yesterday.

Calling the position one of the most difficult jobs in the government, Sheetrit said it would be particularly difficult to "put his stamp on the office" in the four-month period before elections.

"The prime minister said he loves being finance minister, and I can't let myself take away one of his only pleasures," said Sheetrit.

While Netanyahu did offer him the opportunity to be minister without portfolio, Sheetrit declined, saying he would prefer to serve as finance minister in the next government if Netanyahu wins.

Sheetrit added that reports of his demise were too early, particularly after 26 years in the Likud and in public office.

"I'm disappointed that I wasn't appointed" to finance minister, said Sheetrit, "but I'm staying with the Likud. I'm not looking for any special honors."

Tekuma was registered yesterday as a party as Beit El Mayor Uri Ariel, also a member of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, declared "the baby has been born."

Ariel said party members will in the coming weeks discuss the issues and the party's agenda, as well as decide who will head the list.

Party members include Ya'acov Katz, one of Arutz 7's managers,

Benny Katsover and Edi Lahavi of Moshava Kinneret, he said.

Tekuma has a similar direction to MK Binjamin Zeev Begin's party Herut, he said, but would focus on Jewish education and the love of the Land of Israel.

Asked when the party planned to hold a press conference, Ariel laughed and said "today we didn't, even though it's the done thing to do; every day there are at least three or four."

Council members, however, are concerned that Tekuma, along with Moledet and Herut, will only create a split in national camp votes, resulting in the loss of two or three seats.

Council Spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar said that even the National Religious Party may not succeed in alleviating the situation, because many are disappointed with their behavior in the current government.

Tayar said it was imperative to continue attempts in unifying the three parties in order to prevent a reoccurrence of the 1992 elections.

The council plans to hold a two-day seminar within the coming weeks in order to decide which candidate the council will support.

Recent polls carried out by the council have shown that many residents in Judea, Samaria and Gaza support Prime Minister Binjamin Netanyahu, but even so all efforts will be concentrated on unifying and strengthening the national camp, she said.

Tsomet MK Moshe Peled announced yesterday that he will compete for leadership of the party. He said he would work to boost the party's national security platform, which "has become undermined and foggy under the leadership of Rafael Eitan."

Peled also said he would work against Eitan's "leading the party to the center of the political map at a time when the future and existence of the state of Israel is in the balance."

Liat Collins, Jessica Steinberg, Margot Dudkevitch and Nina Gilbert

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Moskowitz: PM will allow construction at Ras al-Amud

By ELLI WOHLGELER

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will not stop the imminent construction at the controversial Ras al-Amud site on the Mount of Olives, according to Dr. Irving Moskowitz, owner of the property.

"That's my understanding, very clearly," he said yesterday, while conducting a tour of the site with part of a delegation that he brought this week from the US.

"We have the permit to build, and he understands that," Moskowitz said.

"And he understands that it is the rule of law that will determine the development, and he understands that the rule of law applies to this property, and that we are going to build here."

Netanyahu's director of communications, David Bar-Ilan, said that "all the permits are there, everything is legal, and there's no way to stop anything like that except [by invoking] public safety. For the time being there doesn't seem to be any reason to invoke it, but the prime minister has not relinquished his right and power to do so."

Moskowitz and his group met with Netanyahu on Tuesday for over an hour, at which Netanyahu was quoted as saying, "We all know that there is a disagreement between me and Dr. Moskowitz regarding the timing of the development."

"When someone else tried later on to ask about Ras al-Amud, Moskowitz cut him off in mid-sentence, saying, 'There is no question, I have a permit, and I'm going to build and there's nothing to discuss further,' at which point Netanyahu raised his eyes and hands to the sky, but did not say anything."

Moskowitz would not say yesterday when actual construction would begin, only that the site will be more than just the 132 apartments for Jews and 700 for Arabs. Sources say construction could



Dr. Irving Moskowitz and his delegation tour Jerusalem's Ras al-Amud neighborhood yesterday, while a peace demonstrator holds up a sign calling for 'settlers to get out.'

begin in two weeks. "We're going to have here not just homes, but a Jewish neighborhood, including a synagogue and a little shopping center."

Moskowitz gave a tour of the area to the men who were here as part of a group of US right-wing financiers, politicians and professionals on a four-day trip. The group came to strengthen the right-wing camp for the upcoming election, as well as explore the political situation in an effort to decide behind whom to throw their support.

Among the delegation was Rep. Mike Forbes (Republican-New York), who lashed out at US

President Bill Clinton for allowing his chief political strategists, including James Carville, to come to Israel to help in the campaign of Labor Party leader Ehud Barak.

"The fact that a United States president has allowed his political advisers to come over here to pick the next prime minister is inappropriate," Forbes said. "Free people the world over have a right to support people who they identify with ideologically, etc., but it's a lot different supporting something financially than coming over here and trying to pick, in the electoral process, the next prime minister. That's why I think the line has been crossed, unfortunately."

A government official acknowledged Clinton's involvement, saying "there's no doubt in our minds that Mr. Carville would not come here without a green light from the president."

Peace Now and Bat Shalom, which oppose the construction of Jewish housing on the site, protested Moskowitz's tour. One demonstrator was arrested.

Margot Dudkevitch adds: Moskowitz was quoted as promising Jewish settlers yesterday that he would do everything in his power to ensure that a Jewish presence remains in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

Yehudit Tayar, spokeswoman for

the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, also said Moskowitz told council members that he had come because of the political situation and also to show his support and strengthen the settlers.

She said that council members expressed their concern over a split in national camp votes because of the number of political parties with national camp interests on their agenda that have been formed.

The council also presented Moskowitz and his delegation a breakdown of four surveys recently completed that portray the feelings of national camp voters, Tayar said.

Would-be J'lem suicide bomber remanded

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The military court at Beit El yesterday remanded an Islamic Jihad activist who brought to Jerusalem an attaché case packed with explosives for a suicide bombing. He was reported to have changed his mind when he spotted a heavy presence of border police near French Hill.

Ahmed Nimer Yusef Malaisha, 21, of Gib'a, was arrested October 24.

Sporting crew-cut, jeans and t-shirt, on October 16 Malaisha was driven to the French Hill intersection with an attaché case packed with explosives where he planned to get on a bus and detonate himself, the charge sheet said.

Scared off by a heavy presence of border policemen he decided to go to Damascus Gate and take a taxi to the central bus station in Jerusalem. But the taxi driver refused to take him, because Malaisha lacked the permits allowing him to enter the capital which made it risky to drive into Jewish-populated areas.

Malaisha decided to return home in a taxi but near the Kalandia refugee camp he noticed border policemen were checking cars. He got out of the car and decided to return again to Damascus Gate and detonate the bag. Once there,

the presence of border policemen deterred him and he set off for Anata where he had been ordered to leave the case in one of three locations if he failed to carry out the attack, the charge sheet says.

He returned to Jenin and met with Hamran, Hardan and Tahaina and it was decided they would meet in the following days and plan another attack.

According to the charge sheet Malaisha travelled to Jordan and met several times with a Syrian Islamic Jihad activist codenamed Sami to discuss carrying out a suicide bomb attack. He returned home after Sami told him he would receive notification regarding the timing of the attack.

Hamran, Hardan and activist Suliman Tahaina assisted Malaisha in planning the attack and choosing a location. Tahaina died November 6 as one of the perpetrators of a car bomb explosion next to Jerusalem's Mahaneh Yehuda which killed only the terrorists.

Some of the locations raised as possible sites to carry out attacks were the central bus stations in Afula and Hadera. However the activists opted for Jerusalem and an area crowded with people. At first plans were made to use a car bomb but later they opted for an attaché case packed with explosives.

Pollard claims spy manual he stole lacked secret codes

American Jewish spy Jonathan Pollard, hoping to win his freedom from a US jail, argued yesterday that a key surveillance manual he gave Israel was useless because it did not contain encryption codes.

Pollard's lawyer, Larry Dub, made the argument in a letter to President Bill Clinton's attorney Charles Ruff after a New Yorker magazine story said the manual and other documents gravely damaged US intelligence systems.

Clinton is reviewing Pollard's case in response to an Israeli request for the former US Navy analyst's release after 14 years in prison.

"The document in question was not a codes manual, but a frequencies manual," said the letter, signed by Dub and dated January 13. "Frequencies/signals manuals without encryption codes are useless, as you know, and Mr. Pollard did not have access to such material."

The letter said Pollard, sentenced to life in 1986 for passing intelligence information to Israel, did not have the security clear-

ances required to handle cryptological data. Pollard has asked Clinton for the right to rebut recommendations the president has sought from security officials for the review, saying they were biased against Pollard.

Clinton promised to review Pollard's case last October during negotiations at the Wye Plantation of a US-brokered interim peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had demanded that Pollard's release be included in the deal.

The idea of freeing Pollard has drawn strenuous opposition from US security professionals who say his release would encourage the United States' enemies.

Writer and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, Edgar M. Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, and Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, who once represented Pollard, asked Clinton this week to show "the redeeming quality of mercy" and free Pollard. (Reuters)

Coalitionless Olmert leaving for Japan

By AMY KLEIN

Still without a coalition in sight, Jerusalem's Mayor Ehud Olmert plans to leave tonight for 10 days in Japan, his third trip abroad since being reelected in November.

Ever since he gave up his plan to challenge Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the Likud leadership, Olmert has been meeting with the various city councilmen to negotiate for what he calls a "broad-based coalition."

The tentative coalition agreement includes a call for the setting up the first stages of the "umbrella municipality," the

haredi education branch as a permanent body within nine months after the coalition is set up, and the appointment of eight deputy directors-general for the religious council.

Olmert will leave with or without a signed agreement, his spokesman Hagai Elias said yesterday. "The municipality can function with or without a coalition," he said.

But councilwoman Anat Hoffman (Meretz) complained that the absence of a coalition was costing the city. "It's running up millions of shekels," she said.

Council committees cannot convene until the coalition is formed. The major financial

losses come from real estate projects being held up because the building and planning committee and licensing committee cannot approve projects.

"The city usually approves one-and-a-half million dollars in building projects per month," Hoffman said. "Contractors are calling us - the opposition - to force the council to make temporary committees to approve building projects and tenders."

In the coalitionless capital, only Meretz can call itself "the opposition," thus far.

The municipality yesterday released a statement which said Meretz had decided not to join the coalition, and that Olmert regretted the fact that the secular public's

representatives gave up the "chance to influence the conciliation and cooperation between the various groups in the city."

Yet the real problem holding up the process is the other secular representative, Ornan Yekutieli, the head of Freedom Now, which holds four seats on the council. Haredi councilman, most notably from Shas and Degel Hatorah, have balked at Olmert's intention to include Yekutieli - last term's opposition leader.

"The mayor wants to create a broad-based coalition as possible," said Elias. "Certain lists do not want to do that. Everyone wants to be part of it, and yet someone is going to have to give."

High Court examines GSS interrogation methods

"Oklahoma bomber receives better legal treatment" say Israeli human rights lawyers

By AMY KLEIN

America's worst convicted terrorist receives better legal treatment than Israeli security prisoners. That's what petitioners to the High Court of Justice intended to prove yesterday when they submitted an affidavit from Timothy McVeigh's lawyer saying the Oklahoma City bomber's interrogators adhered to legal procedures that the General Security Service doesn't.

The High court convened to discuss six petitions involving the

alleged use of torture by the GSS. After a four-hour summation by the State Attorney's office yesterday defending GSS methods used as "neither torture nor cruel and inhumane punishment," the court called for a recess without giving the petitioners a chance to speak.

The petitioners were submitted by civil rights lawyers representing four Palestinians, the Association for Civil Rights and the Public Committee Against Torture.

Two of the petitions call for a ban during interrogation on shaking and a method called "sabeq"

where detainees are hooded, bound hand and foot, and are forced to listen to loud music.

Representing the State Attorney's Office, lawyer Shai Nitzan argued that the GSS uses these methods in "ticking bomb" cases, where they can prevent upcoming terrorist attacks. Nitzan said that two weapons factories in Nablus and Hebron containing 500-700 kilograms of explosives were recently discovered because of GSS information acquired in this way.

"It is not a question of whether

the method succeeds," said Allegra Pacheco, one of the human rights lawyers, "but the method itself that is in question." Pacheco said that when the court reconvenes, the lawyers intend to submit the affidavit of Robert Nigh Jr., the lead attorney for Timothy McVeigh, the defendant in the Oklahoma City bombing case convicted of killing 168 people.

"Even though Mr. McVeigh was charged with the most lethal act of domestic terrorism in American history... Mr. McVeigh was provided with counsel immediately

after his arrest, and no effort was made to interrogate or to obtain information from Mr. McVeigh outside the presence of his attorneys," the affidavit reads.

After the hearing, attorney Avigdor Feldman said, "It is not acceptable that our government should be the only one in the world to permit torture." An Amnesty International observer, Joanna Oyediran, said, "The prohibition against torture is absolute. Israel is violating the international conventions which it has signed," she said.

headlines saying he has backtracked on yet another ostensibly bold move. He won't be made to look like the retreating weakling again.

Ramon can't afford to let him get away with apparently holding the primaries, but in actual fact hijacking them. But he also cannot afford to burn what remains of his personal bridges to Barak.

If there is no compromise, Ramon is in a bind. He genuinely has not decided whether Shahak is a viable option, and he will not be sure of that until he sees which way Mordechai jumps.

only deepened the suspicion which always underlined the Ramon-Barak relationship. Their uneasy ties go back to the 1996 elections, when Barak headed Shimon Peres's personal campaign for prime minister and Ramon was in charge of the Labor information campaign.

They clashed throughout, foiled each other repeatedly, and, after the defeat, blamed each other.

Now they are facing off again, though Ramon would be most relieved if a face-saving compromise is worked out.

Striking a macho pose, Barak insists that this time there will be no

ment to get him elected prime minister.

It is not clear if Ramon will take part in the deliberations today in which the thorny issue is to be thrashed out. Some say he will deliver a stinging address. Others predict he will absent himself and thereby send his most powerful message yet.

The fact is that Ramon is uncharacteristically silent, saying nothing on the record, which could be an attempt to threaten Barak with the Shahak option, just as Mordechai is doing to Netanyahu.

The events of recent days have

flabbergasted. Privately he argues that there is really no sense in staging the primaries production at all, because it will be meaningless.

Candidates for the primaries will work hard and spend plenty of money for naught, because Barak is seeking the power to do as he pleases. Ramon's conclusion is that Barak is not really interested in the party and the MKs.

He doesn't know the meaning of the word partnership and doesn't want a team, but a group of subservient aides who will be very dispensable when their usefulness is over. The party is merely an instru-

SHAHAK

Continued from Page 1

Front-runners in Labor will be pushed back arbitrarily by Barak to make room for any political acquisitions with which he may wish to decorate his list. Labor backbenchers, no matter how promising and hard-working, may simply be shoved out.

"This Labor list would then have to be incorporated inside the One Israel front, where Barak wants a free hand and anything may go. Ramon is reported to have been

"If it was done for the purpose of hurting Barak or helping his opponents, it's an Israeli Watergate. It would be easy for the story to be the Israeli Watergate. But until they catch someone, we're not sure. For all we know, they [the intruders] are kids from the neighborhood looking for money and beer," Rabinowitz said.

The thieves apparently broke into the building by climbing through air conditioning ducts. Once inside they stole the diskettes and the cash and made photocopies of several files, Rabinowitz said. He also stated that it is not in Greenberg or Barak's interest to

reveal publicly what information was contained on the stolen diskettes.

"They don't want to say exactly what [was taken] because they don't want people to know exactly what they were doing [for Barak], and in addition, they are sensitive to the charge by the Likud that Barak can't think for himself," Rabinowitz said.

Because Greenberg is not fluent in Hebrew and is not intimately familiar with Israeli society, he probably would not have been preparing precise wording for questions for Barak's public opinion polls, Rabinowitz offered. Instead, he said,

what Greenberg can do best "is suggest the types of questions, the style, the - we call them batteries of the kinds of questions that have never been asked in Israeli polls before."

Asked why a Barak opponent might have committed such a theft, Rabinowitz said he was puzzled. "It doesn't make sense. The risk of getting caught is so much bigger than the information you might learn. There is not in the files of Stanley Greenberg the key to what makes Ehud Barak successful. To do a break-in where there's a hole in the ceiling and everyone points the finger at you - it's not worth it."

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POST

US official: Unreasonable not to expect riots if Wye not implemented

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - It is not in the Palestinian Authority's interest to encourage riots in the territories to protest Israel's suspension of implementing the Wye agreement, but it may also be unreasonable to expect that Palestinians at the grassroots level will remain quiet, a senior US administration official said yesterday.

At the same time, he added, the US is concerned over both the regression of Israeli-Palestinian relations and a potentially prolonged lack of movement during the lengthy election campaign and would like to see the sides conclude at least some steps that would demonstrate the agreement is being translated into action.

Short of continued redeployments, such steps could include the opening of safe passage routes, economic cooperation, and implementing family reunifications as called for under Wye.

All could "help reduce the impatience and frustration" and "could lead things back" on track, he said.

In addition, the US does not accept Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's conditioning the redeployments on the PA's prior fulfillment of its responsibilities, and instead interprets the agreed-upon schedule of reciprocal moves as a "time line," just as it is called in the Wye agreement, he said.

The postponement of the Wye process has not led the US to consider cutting off the process of presenting to Congress the administration's request for funds to assist Israel and the PA in carrying out the Wye accord, the official said.

The administration still intends "to do our part [and] submit the supplemental" request for \$1.2 billion for Israel and \$400 million for the PA, he said, adding that the request would likely be sent up to Capitol Hill in February.

Officials from the Defense and Finance ministries have met here this week with assistant secretary of state Martin Indyk to complete bilateral discussions on the aid request before the administration begins consultations with Congress.

As to whether the PA might find it in its interest to foment demonstrations, the official responded: "They'll make their own calculations whether it serves their interest to bear things up. As far as the people: I hope they won't turn the page backward. That's an interest for the Israeli people, the Palestinian people, and us - that there's enough hope at the end of the road so they don't resort to desperate actions."

"I don't know if they [the Palestinian leadership] has 100 percent control. My expectation is they will not view it in their immediate or long-term interest to stir up violence. I don't think we need to jump to conclusions that if demonstrations take place, [that] there was a yellow light [given by the PA]. It's in everyone's interest that the Palestinians see there is progress in the future."

"But," he continued, "I don't know if we can expect the Palestinians not to express any anger. It's what kind of expressions - whether it's peaceful or violent demonstrations, or terrorism."

هكذا من الأصل

Rabbis move to keep Reform, Conservatives off religious councils

By HAIM SHAPIRO

What the Chief Rabbinate described as a historic meeting, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau and Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron traveled to Bnei Brak yesterday to call upon the Agudat Yisrael Council of Sages and discuss ways of avoiding seating Reform and Conservative representatives on the religious councils.

According to Bakshi-Doron, the meeting was intended to inform the Council of Sages about the religious councils, after the High Court of Justice ruled

that Reform and Conservative candidates must be seated on them. Bakshi-Doron asserted that if carried out, the ruling could bring a new holocaust on the Jewish people.

This week's High Court ruling that the Haifa Religious Council must meet with its Reform and Conservative members marked the end of the road for the religious councils, which must be abolished, the Bakshi-Doron said. He added that religious services should be provided by the Chief Rabbinate, to separate the provision of such services from politics.

Lau proposed that rather than abolishing the religious councils, their membership should be reduced, to ensure that "those who observe Halacha in all areas" would provide religious services within the framework of the religious councils.

In response, Rabbi Ehud Bandel, president of Israel's Conservative movement, said that the meeting was an indication of the panic gripping the religious establishment over the fear of losing its religious monopoly. He said it is sad that the only thing that unifies Zionist rabbis and anti-Zionist haredi rabbis is their

hatred of any non-Orthodox religious expression.

Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center, pointed out that the chief rabbis have refused to come to the Knesset to meet with Knesset committees.

Prof. Eliezer Don-Yehiye of Bar-Ilan University, an expert on Israeli religious politics, said that the meeting was the first in recent years, but there had been meetings between chief rabbis and the Aguda Council of Sages during the early years of the state. The meeting, he said, indicates that the haredi leaders are

coming closer to the religious establishment, from which they had previously distanced themselves.

As for the fact that the chief rabbis had come to the Aguda council, Don-Yehiye said it is true that who visits whom has a symbolic significance, but that it was no doubt easier for the chief rabbis to go the Aguda body, since the Council of Sages did not purport to represent all Jewry and thus their visit did not imply recognition. Had the council called upon the chief rabbis, this could imply recognition, Don-Yehiye said.

NEWS in brief

Two-hour school strike today

Secondary schools will strike today until 10 a.m., because last month's salaries have not yet been paid to teachers in 10 local authorities, the Teachers' Union said yesterday.

The union kept schools closed for two hours on Tuesday for the same reason.

Yahalom checking if El Al flies on Shabbat

Transport Minister Shaul Yahalom said yesterday that he is considering the possibility of setting up a committee to investigate whether El Al is running secret flights on Shabbat. He was referring to a dispute which arose last week following his announcement that a ministry committee had recommended authorizing CAL, a charter cargo airline specializing in flying agricultural produce, to run regular scheduled charter flights. El Al workers protested that this would be unfair, since CAL would be allowed to fly on Shabbat, while El Al is prevented from doing so by the government.

In its response, CAL said that El Al does fly on Shabbat, since the CAL Shabbat flights are with aircraft and air crews leased from the national airlines.

El Al spokesman Nachman Klieman said yesterday that there has been no change in the status quo regarding the company's operations in recent years.

Peace activists in caravan to Akaba

A caravan of some 100 peace activists from 30 countries and the Palestinian autonomous areas is slowly making its way from the Dead Sea to Akaba on camels, donkeys, and bicycles. On the way, participants are picking up trash and holding workshops on environmental issues. The Peace Caravan started out on January 3 from Ein Bokek and is scheduled to reach Eilat on January 18 for a tree-planting ceremony and "peace celebration" concluding the mission in Israel, before crossing the border to Jordan where it hopes to plant trees and participate in beach clean-ups with residents of Akaba.

Tourism down

The number of tourists in 1998 dropped 4 percent to 2.2 million, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Tourism Ministry said this week.

Approximately 1.5 million tourists arrived by airplane, a decrease from 1.56 million in 1997, according to the bureau's statistics. Cruise visitors declined to 258,200 in 1998 from 285,000 in 1997, a 9% fall. And from the total number of visitors who arrived by air, 132,600 flew directly to Eilat, a 14% decrease compared with 154,000 in 1997.

Fire-extinguishing bombs to soon be in use

New fire-quenching bombs will soon be used by firefighters, Capt. Danny Hananya, head of the eastern Galilee and Golan firefighter force, said yesterday.

The bombs, which are made of plastic and weigh about 5 kg. each, extinguish the fire's core while dispersing a substance that stops the fire from spreading to its surrounding area.

The bombs were tested in practice trials and worked smoothly, said Hananya.

Each bomb costs NIS 200.

Vatican declines to exhibit 'Jesus boat'

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican said yesterday it had declined a request from Israel to take part in a joint exhibition of an ancient wooden fishing boat dating to the time of Jesus that is on display at Kibbutz Ginosar.

The Vatican said Israel's ambassador to the Holy See proposed the boat go on display first in Jerusalem and then the Vatican, as part of millennium celebrations in 2000.

No reason was given for the Vatican's change of mind.

The boat, large enough for a four-member fishing crew, was excavated in 1986 and is on display in a special preservation tank at Kibbutz Ginosar.

Naomi Simons adds:

The Education Ministry had opposed the proposal made by Antiquities Authority Director-General Amir Dror to lend the boat to the Vatican.

"We said that the artifact is a very important tourist attraction to Israel. If it goes to the Vatican, tourists will not come to Israel to see it," explained Menahem Cohen, deputy Director-General of the Education Ministry, who looks after the ministry's relations with the Authority.



Visiting the sick
MK Rafi Elul (Labor) yesterday visits Julie Hoshangi, 7, who fell out of a window at the Shimoni elementary school in Petah Tikva on Tuesday. She is hospitalized at the Schneider Children's Medical Center for Israel. Education Ministry Director-General Ben-Zion Dell, meanwhile, appointed a committee to look into the reasons for the accident.

Hospital doctors declare dispute

By JUDY SIEGEL

The government hospital doctors' union yesterday proclaimed a work dispute over a Treasury budget official's statement that the government will no longer finance the paychecks of hundreds of physicians. Instead, the Treasury wants independent research funds and friends' associations to cover their salaries.

In two weeks, the doctors said, they will launch a strike over the issue.

Union head Dr. Elisha Bar-Tov said he was shocked when Haim Pelts, the Treasury official in charge of health system funding, wrote to a Civil Service Commission official that he wouldn't carry out a long-term commitment to cover the wage bill of the doctors, some 10 per-

cent of state hospital physicians.

The Health Ministry said that Director-General Gabi Barabash called Pelts and expressed his "shock" at the letter and his dissociating the state from a commitment that it had previously approved, as did the Civil Service Commission.

Barabash asked Pelts to reconsider so that a labor dispute would not break out.

Health funds' deficits down

By JUDY SIEGEL

The four health funds showed a welcome decrease in their deficits and increase in efficiency during the first six months of 1998, after their expenses were put under limits by the Health Ministry.

The accounting firm of Witkovsky, Abramson, Cnaan and Company, hired by the ministry to supervise the funds' financial reports, issued a report yesterday on their operations during the first two quarters of last year. Copies were sent to senior Treasury and Health Ministry officials and to the health funds themselves.

The insurers' deficits in 1997 totaled NIS 1.5 billion, or 8.9 percent of their expenditures; in the first half of 1998, the deficit was brought down to 4.3% of expenditures, or NIS 390 million.

Clalit, with 3.9 million mem-

bers, had a deficit of NIS 176m., compared to NIS 80m. for Maccabi (1.147 million members), NIS 94m. for Leumi (565,000 members), and NIS 39m. for Meuhedet (526,000 members). Clalit's deficit for the first half of last year was 64% lower than that during the same period in 1997. Maccabi, by contrast, reduced its deficit by only 34%.

MK to Clalit: Stop substituting drugs

MK Michael Nudelman (Yisrael Ba'aliya) yesterday presented an urgent parliamentary question demanding that Kupat Holim Clalit stop requiring its doctors to substitute cheaper drugs for more expensive ones, even if the latter are better suited to patients' conditions.

Nudelman, who is chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, also called for increased supervision on the health funds. He said he learned of a number of patients who were hospitalized as a result of getting unsuitable medications, and even "of one person who died" because of this.

The Clalit spokeswoman categorically denied that any patient has died or been hospitalized because he received a cheaper version of the same drug.

Survivors challenge WJRO's bid for special standing in Swiss bank settlement

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK — The World Jewish Restitution Organization's bid for advisory standing in the \$1.25 billion Swiss bank settlement has raised the question of who represents Nazi victims, as lawyers representing Holocaust survivors challenged the organization.

They asked a US federal court in Brooklyn to deny the WJRO any special role, in part because the WJRO itself is seeking funds from the settlement.

Granting the WJRO or any individual or organization a special status would render the fairness of the allocation plan "suspect in the eyes of a large part of the Holocaust survivor community," the lawyers wrote this week in a reply to the WJRO motion.

"This is a particular concern with

respect to the WJRO, since it and its member organizations are likely to be applicants for funds from the settlement," wrote the 10 lawyers of the so-called executive committee, who handle the negotiations on behalf of survivors.

The WJRO last month filed a "motion to intervene" in the settlement against UBS and Credit Suisse. It asked for special status to represent Holocaust survivors in the settlement, to be designated as a signatory to the agreement, and to be appointed as an adviser to the "special master" who is to be appointed this month to administer the settlement.

The WJRO said its motion was an effort to protect the principle that the Jewish community should be responsible for deciding what happens to restituted Jewish property.

Although the settlement was announced in August, there are not yet plans to distribute the \$1.25b.

Two members of the WJRO, the Jewish Agency and the Joint Distribution Committee, are expected to seek funds from the settlement.

The lawyers argued that WJRO intervention is unnecessary because it, and all Jewish organizations, will have a "meaningful" opportunity to express their views about the allocation of the settlement, and because the organization could not indicate how survivors' interests would be enhanced by its special standing.

The lawyers also noted that the WJRO had already played an active role, saying that Israel Singer, of the World Jewish Congress, has participated in the settlement negotiations.

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Yasser and the Yankees

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright refuses to meet Israeli Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon. The White House press secretary attacks an article by Israeli Ambassador Zalmay Shoval, arguing the Palestinian Authority has complied more fully than Israel with the Wye Agreement.

The Region



Barry Rubin

For the first time in history, US-Palestinian relations seem better than US-Israel relations and many will attribute such friction as American interference in Israel's election. But it isn't so, the same things would be happening even if there was no ballot day on the calendar.

In late November, international donors met under US sponsorship to pledge another \$3.3 billion of aid to the PA for the next five years, about \$900 million of it from the US.

Per capita, the PA now ranks after Israel as the second largest US economic aid recipient in the world. Incidentally, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait combined offered only \$180 million, about the same as Norway alone.

Last December, Albright and PA head Yasser Arafat opened the first meeting of a US-PA Joint Commission to discuss bilateral relations, an institution usually used only for state-to-state contacts. But this doesn't mean the US is ready to recognize a Palestinian state. On the contrary, the US diplomacy is directed at trying to persuade Arafat to postpone such a declaration.

During his visit to Gaza on December 14, President Bill Clinton gave a relentlessly evenhanded speech whose message combined an understanding of Palestinian grievances with urging the PA to continue the peace process and reassure Israelis. He concluded:

"Neither side has a monopoly on pain or virtue... The fulfillment of one side's aspirations must not come at the expense of the other. We must believe that everyone can win in the new Middle East... I believe you have gained more in five years of peace than in 45 years of war."

Chassan al-Khatib, head of the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, wrote in *Palestine Report* that Palestinians are divided about America. PA officials were enthusiastic about the visit and felt it meant US support for their side. But the public was indifferent, "increasingly critical" of Clinton for his policies toward Israel and Iraq. US flags waved during the visit were burned a few days later.

Traditionally, the PLO has looked on the US as an enemy, Israel's main backer, and an imperialist force blocking Arab unity and progress. The PLO's policy shift toward Israel was closely linked to a serious reevaluation of the US.

Arafat knows he must persuade the US to take his side as often as possible in negotiations. In contrast, Hamas continues to be very hostile, while insisting it will not attack American targets.

Khaled Masha'al, chief of the Hamas Political Bureau, has said that nothing good could come from the United States.

which he defines as a Zionist puppet. Hamas leader Ahmed Yassin said the sexual liaison between Clinton and White House intern Monica Lewinsky was a plot by "the Zionist lobby and world Zionism" to blackmail Clinton and stop him "from exerting pressure on Israel."

Yet PA sources have sometimes thought in similar terms. PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Muddain has insisted that "five Zionist Jews are running the policy of the United States in the Middle East." Hafiz al-Barghuti, editor of the official PA newspaper, *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, referred to the pro-Israel US Congress as the "Council of the Elders of Zion" of which "the White House is a hostage."

In September 1997, there was a revealing exchange between the PA's two views on America in *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*. The paper reprinted an article from Fatah's newsletter urging the removal of Ambassador Dennis Ross as mediator, calling him "part of the oppressive racist Zionist actions which are armed with immense imperialistic influence." It compared Ross to Shylock, cutting up Palestinian territory and giving it to Israel.

At that moment, however, Arafat badly needed the sympathy of Ross and the US government. To insult the key mediator — with an antisemitic slur no less — was tremendously damaging. Pro-Arafat PLC member Nabil Amr wrote a response that agreed that US policy was unfair and Ross was biased. Nevertheless, he continued, "Describing Ross in this manner plays right into the hands of Israeli extremists, who can exploit this description in order to work against us at a time when we are in need of all parties' support of our rights and our sincere peaceful approach."

One of the newspaper's editors replied that it was ridiculous to criticize what were just words while the "gang" running Israel massacred babies and threatened to demolish holy sites.

Yet despite the periodic expression of extreme views, PA leaders are more sophisticated in evaluating US behavior, knowing they must gain American help and support. Arafat frequently praises US assistance in the negotiations, and in his UN speech stated, "The Americans have made and are making efforts they should be thanked for."

After all, this was the government Arafat accepted as the peace agreements' principal guarantor, his main source of aid, a trainer for his security forces, and increasingly, the mediator. In the Wye agreement, the PA made the CIA the virtual arbiter of whether it was meeting its obligations in agreements with Israel.

These were the acts of a Palestinian leadership ready to risk its future on US credibility, not one believing the US was controlled by Israel.

Many times in the past — as with the 1988-1990 US-PLO dialogue — Palestinian leaders have thrown away great opportunities to improve ties with the US and gain American help. Perhaps they will not make that mistake this time.

Iceland's genetic pool is sold

In a highly controversial move, the Reykjavik government has given a biotechnology company the rights to study its citizens' genetic code

By JOHN SCHWARTZ

Iceland has decided to become the first country in the world to sell the rights to the entire population's genetic code to a biotechnology company — a move that is highlighting the promise and risks of the genetic information age.

The strikingly uniform DNA of Iceland's largely blue-eyed, blond-haired populace is expected to provide an invaluable resource for studying human genetics, leading to fundamental insights into many diseases, proponents say.

"It really is a complete paradigm shift in medicine," said Jonathan Knowles, who heads research at Roche Holding Ltd., which has signed a \$200 million, five-year deal to develop new drugs and tests from the data.

But the plan is highly controversial because it will pool richly detailed genetic, medical and genealogical information about Iceland's 270,000 residents into a set of linked databases that companies will search for clues into the nature of disease.

Although a majority of Iceland's citizens support the plan, a vocal minority of scientists and doctors — with support from a worldwide network of like-minded privacy advocates — have stoked the controversy.

"Most doctors and scientists here in Iceland are in favor of the basic purpose of this project — but find the proposed solution quite unethical and unrealistic," said Jon Erlendsson, a Reykjavik-based engineer and writer who believes the database network will eventually fail because doctors and patients will refuse to cooperate once its nature is better understood.

Opponents fear the database could make the most private details of individuals' lives public. People with mental illness or other health problems could be stigmatized, perhaps suffering job discrimination.

Patients may become less willing to divulge personal information to their doctors. And in a country where some estimates say that about 10 percent of the population may have been born out of wedlock, long-held family secrets could leak out.

THE fight in Iceland is focusing attention on the potential risks of efforts to mine and refine personal data — efforts that are also increasingly common in the US and around the world.

"Turning the population into electronic guinea pigs" should serve as a warning to Americans, said David Banisar of the Washington-based Electronic Privacy Information Center.

Despite the objections, Iceland could begin collecting blood to obtain the DNA samples within six months, after a period in which citizens may decline to participate. Precisely how the blood will be collected has not been determined.

The plan was proposed by a Harvard-educated Icelandic scientist as a way to develop a new natural resource for a country where unemployment is a chronic problem. Iceland's parliament, the Althing, approved the plan last month, passing a law authorizing the database and creating the framework that will enable a local company, deCODE Genetics, to hold an unusual 12-year monopoly on data marketing rights.

Iceland's population presents a tantalizing opportunity for those who study genetics because all of that blond hair and blue eyes reflects one of the most remarkably



The strikingly uniform DNA of Iceland's largely blue-eyed, blond-haired populace is expected to provide an invaluable resource for studying human genetics. (Camera Press)

homogeneous populations in the world. The original blend of 9th century Norse stock and Celtic seamen has been largely unchanged, and that gene pool was further restricted by bouts of plague, famine and volcanic eruption.

This comparatively simple set of genes makes genetic prospecting far less daunting than attempting to track down faulty genes among the millions of chemical components arrayed along the human chromosomes in heterogeneous populations like that of the US.

It's a little like trying to detect a single flat note sung by one person while wandering through a public park in which everyone is singing his own favorite tune. The distractions of the merengue, the klezmer, the classical and the sea chanteys make it even harder to find the errant note. A homogeneous population such as Iceland's, however, is more like a chorus, with most people singing from the same page — so it's much easier to discern when one of the singers is off.

BECAUSE Iceland has a strong health care system with extensive record-keeping, as well as genealogical records that go back hundreds of years, it offers tremendous potential for ferreting out the relationship between the genetic and environmental origins of disease, said Kari Stefansson, deCODE's Harvard-educated chief executive.

Researchers will be able to sift through the data to uncover medical insights "in a systematic manner," Stefansson said, adding that "it's going to be a great discovery tool."

Those in Iceland supporting the plan say it strikes a careful balance between the rights of the citizenry and the needs of science.

The unified health database will

"improve delivery of health services... On balance, I think the potential advantages will outweigh the risks involved," said Solveig Petursdottir, a member of parliament who voted for it.

Opponents of the law cite numerous problems. Many of them are among the nation's leading scientists and scholars. They argue their case in Icelandic and English on their Web site, and have formed an advocacy group, Mannvernd, "to promote ethical standards in medical research, science and in the biotechnology industry in Iceland" and to oppose the new law, which the group's Web site says "infringes upon accepted medical, scientific and commercial standards."

They say that they understand the importance of deCODE's work and support earlier efforts by the company to understand genetic diseases by studying the DNA of Icelandic volunteers. But the new plan, they say, takes away too much privacy — for private gain — and gives too little back to the nation and to science.

"When you put genealogical information into the databank and also genetic data, then the databank knows more about you than you know about yourself," said Tomas Zoega, chairman of the Icelandic Medical Association's ethics council. "Some look at it as a fantastic idea. But I think the idea is a scary one."

OPPOSITIONISTS complain that they still have not been told how the DNA will be collected, or how much information will be stored in the database. Those details will be decided by a government-created committee.

The company has promised to collect the data "anonymously" but uses that word with great caution, opponents say. Among most database experts, "anonymous" almost

always means that identifying information will be stripped away. But in this case, the information directly identifying individuals will be encrypted so that it cannot easily be read by unauthorized people.

British researcher Ross Anderson has prepared a paper for the *Icelandic Medical Association* that questions the notion that anonymity can be protected when so much data is collected. The company has pledged to program the computers to produce no fewer than 10 records for any query so that the computers can never identify an individual.

But multiple searches can winnow one name out of 10, Anderson said, adding that no encryption scheme can mask identities when so much personal information is stored in one place.

Opponents also argue that the pay-as-you-go research concept damages the spirit of science, in which knowledge should be freely shared.

Most important from a doctor's point of view, Zoega said, is the possibility that "trust between patients and physicians will diminish and maybe disappear" if people believe that every fact about them will be entered into the database.

"I think that those are the people who have not been ill, who do not have medical records lying about," said Petur Hansson, a psychiatrist who chairs the Icelandic Psychiatric Patients Association.

OPPOSITION to the database law is, if anything, even stronger outside of Iceland.

Privacy officials of the European Union have been sharply critical of the database proposal. Researchers with expertise in genetics and public policy said that the nation's scientific goal is laudable but that the

plan is flawed. Simon Davies, head of the London-based Privacy International, said the trend toward the collection of more data at the expense of privacy is a worldwide problem.

"A sensible civil libertarian will say the democratic process failed us. It's all just evaporated in the past five years."

Davies said people are too quick to accede to arguments based on "economic rationalism" without thinking about the broader implications. "Thin-lipped accountants have taken control," he said.

Iceland has gone further than other European nations, Davies said, but it will not be alone for long. "What we're seeing in Iceland is just the forerunner of a Europe-wide mechanism," Davies said.

"Wherever you see a bad law, you can bet that the rest of Europe will sink to that level and integrate," Pharmaceutical scientist Knowles acknowledged the potential for abuse. "We must do everything possible to ensure that privacy of individuals is maintained," he said.

Because the data will be used to look for statistical relationships in large populations, the company has no motivation to examine information about specific persons, he said. "Individual data is of no use whatsoever."

Fears of abuse should be addressed through legislation, not by restricting the project, Stefansson said. "We should not let the bad guys dictate public policy," he said. "We're not going to let people die simply because it might be abused."

"You do not place limitations on the creation of new knowledge," he said, "you place limitations on the ways that the new knowledge can be used."

(The Washington Post)

Blair's government battles persistent sleaze allegations

By SUE LEAMAN

When Tony Blair's Labor government took power, it was shiny and ever-so-correct. Twenty months later, it is battling against the kind of sleaze allegations that helped sink the previous Conservative administration.

As the row rumbled on over three successive high-profile resignations, the government spent Tuesday playing down allegations from the embittered former wife of Foreign Secretary Robin Cook that he was a serial adulterer with a drinking problem who sacrificed his principles in the pursuit of power.

None of it looks likely to go away anytime soon, despite Labor's concerted efforts to shift the focus from personalities to policies.

Take Home Secretary Jack

Straw, whose announcement Tuesday of a crackdown on persistent offenders and more money for burglary prevention programs was supposed to fuel just another, well-publicized day in the war against crime.

Instead, the media were more interested in speculation that Blair plans to reinstate trade and industry secretary Peter Mandelson, a key architect of Labor's election victory and favored Blair aide who resigned last month over an undisclosed home loan.

"Hype and mischief-making," insisted a spokesman for Blair's Downing Street office, speaking with customary anonymity.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown and Health Secretary Frank Dobson had hoped to grab some attention Monday by promising to provide more hospital beds and give overworked nurses a much-needed pay

increase.

But Tuesday's headline in *The Independent* newspaper said it all: "Backbench revolt over Mandelson takes shine off Labor's relaunch."

It reflected the angry debate seething among ordinary lawmakers over Mandelson's surprise appearance last week at a meeting of a joint working party set up by the British and German governments.

Mandelson had resigned December 23 after *The Guardian* newspaper revealed he failed to disclose a 1996 home loan of £373,000 from fellow legislator Geoffrey Robinson — even though his own department was investigating Robinson's business dealings.

Robinson resigned as paymaster-general at the Treasury hours after Mandelson. And on January 4, Charlie Whelan, Gordon Brown's spokesman, also stepped down,

after newspapers speculated that he leaked the loan information.

Whelan's departure resurrected talk of rivalry between Blair and Brown — and so each has been forced to go on the record praising the other.

Promising to keep tongues wagging for days are the titillating excerpts published in *The Sunday Times* from Margaret Cook's vengeful biography. In it, she claims her former husband had six lovers, drank heavily, even at work, and chose a moment when she was mourning the death of her beloved horse to inform her he had been unfaithful.

She further alleges that Cook is tortured by his decision to abandon his socialist principles in "New Labor's" drive to get elected after 18 years in opposition.

Blair said Cook will stay in his job, but some feel the foreign secretary has been left looking rather

too foolish.

An ambitious, canny operator who is sometimes portrayed as arrogant, Mandelson is credited with taking Labor's working-class "fish and chips" image upmarket, putting its bosses in designer suits and bringing in a battalion of spin doctors.

That, and his influence with Blair, have made him many enemies in Parliament. And they do not relish his return.

The Times warned Blair to avoid the Conservatives' errors of judgment and reputation for cronyism and keep Mandelson out of public life.

"Prime among the annoyances of the last government was the lack of contrition that ministers showed when they made mistakes," it said in an editorial Tuesday. "This government, in this affair, has been just as bad." (AP)



Twenty months after taking power, Prime Minister Tony Blair is battling the kind of sleaze allegations that helped sink the previous Conservative administration. (AP)

Taboos go as EU media bite the hand that fed them

By DOUGLAS HAMILTON

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The European Union yesterday teetered on the brink of an unplanned revolution, thanks in part to the vigorous muck-raking of its once tame media and their catalytic effect on a timid parliament.

But a strong habit of compromise and an abiding aversion to risk made a retreat before a crucial vote tomorrow the most likely outcome, producing a "business-as-usual" deal rather than the stable-clearing brawl that some say would clear the air.

At stake was the balance of power between a weak parliament and the lofty European Commission executive, a relationship now indelibly marked as a dangerous weak spot in EU architecture.

Whatever the outcome, the unprecedented clash between the two key institutions over the past week heralds harsher scrutiny in future for a Commission often seen

as out of touch with real life.

The Brussels EU press corp was for long a cosy, non-confrontational club, say veterans, asking no tough questions and writing no ugly or unworthy stories.

The Commission and its spokesmen were too valuable, too convenient a one-stop source of daily euro-news for reporters to risk ruffling their feathers.

Now, the press is playing hardball, giving the rogue's gallery treatment this week to European Commission members accused by the Parliament of fraud, incompetence and abuse.

Encouraged by the splash it caused by threatening to censure the Commission, Parliament unwittingly steered the crisis to a denouement few would have predicted: wielding one of its few real weapons, it scraped up courage for a vote to "censure" the entire 20-member executive.

But, half a day before the final ballot, signs of tactical withdrawal

were surfacing.

Some EU commentators will be relieved. They warned that sacking the Commission would take a wrecking ball to the scaffolding of European integration and eastward expansion.

Others looked forward with undisguised glee to what they considered a blow for democracy long overdue, even if it was struck by doubtful heroes in what some consider a fat-cat parliament.

An astonishing bout of fisticuffs has broken out between the passengers on the gravy train," said the British Daily Telegraph's Boris Johnson, a former Brussels correspondent who urged parliament not to "wimp out again," as it has done in seven past confrontations with the Commission.

"Here is a heaven-sent chance to show us all that our votes won't be worthless next June (in the European parliamentary elections)... Come on, folks. Let them have it," he said.

True believers as well as British euro-sceptics have joined the call for a harder-nosed approach to the EU and the highly paid executives - most of them former leading lights in national politics - who spend its \$100 billion annual budget.

When the media started to dig deeper and stories of nepotism, arrogance and corruption appeared, the Commission reacted with outrage, systematically slandering journalists who dared to attack it.

Hartwig Nahe, of the German magazine Focus, wrote in a local media newsletter:

Unelected and unused to facing normal democratic checks, the Commissioners failed to see the positive side of what was happening, that "Europe has finally become so strong that it must be strictly controlled by parliament and the media," he wrote.

"Commissioners must learn that they can't keep their diplomatic immunity while stopping duty-free

WORLD

in brief

Guerrillas free Yugoslav soldiers in Kosovo

LIKOVAC, Serbia (Reuters) - Ethnic Albanian guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army yesterday freed eight Yugoslav army soldiers in an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe-mediated deal, easing fears of a relapse into war in the region.

"We are pleased that, as part of a fair and balanced agreement, the KLA has released the Yugoslav soldiers," said William Walker, head of the Kosovo Verification Mission of the OSCE.

Swiss ministers say they will resign

ZURICH (Reuters) - Two of Switzerland's most senior government ministers said yesterday they would resign in April to help rejuvenate their party ahead of October elections.

Foreign Minister Flavio Cotti, 59, and Justice Minister Arnold Koller, 65, both members of the conservative Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP), told a Bern news conference "One should give young political talent a chance."

Following the news, the CVP told the Swiss News Agency SDA that there had been no pressure put on the ministers to resign.

Police stop gays from protesting in Vatican

VATICAN CITY (Reuters) - Italian police yesterday barred a group of homosexuals from entering St. Peter's Square in memory of a man who set himself alight there a year ago in protest at discrimination against gays.

The group of around 15 homosexuals wanted to lay a wreath and flowers at the spot where Alfredo Ormando set fire to himself on the steps of St. Peter's Square on January 13, 1998. He died several days later.

"You cannot enter the square because it is a place of worship," a police official told the demonstrators.

The Vatican had no comment on the demonstration.

Evel Knievel hoping for liver transplant

TAMPA, Fla. (Reuters) - Motorcycle daredevil Evel Knievel, who has a long history of broken bones caused by his stunts, was in Tampa General Hospital yesterday hoping for a liver transplant. Knievel, 60, was admitted to last week suffering from dehydration and exhaustion, his doctor said.

In a message posted on his Web site (www.evelknievel.com), Knievel said he needed a new liver soon because he was suffering from Hepatitis C.

"We are awaiting a donor of a liver that will be a suitable match for my blood type, O positive, the most common type in this nation," Knievel said.

Yemeni tribesmen free British hostage

SANAA (Reuters) - Yemeni tribesmen yesterday freed a British oil worker, they kidnapped east of Sanaa on Saturday, Yemeni and British officials said.

A Yemeni official said John Brooke was released unharmed.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook welcomed the release of Brooke, who had been kidnapped only two weeks after four Western hostages, including three Britons, died in a shoot-out in Yemen between militant Islamists and government forces.

Cook told reporters in The Hague, where he was visiting the UN International Criminal Tribunal, that Brooke had been seen by the local British ambassador and was "safe and well."

"I am delighted with this outcome," he said.

A spokesman for the British Foreign Office in London said arrangements were being made to bring Brooke back as soon as possible.

A British Embassy official in Yemen said Brooke, an employee of US oil field services firm Halliburton Co., may have already arrived in Sanaa.

Yemeni authorities told Britain on Sunday that Brooke was safe and that negotiations had started with the tribesmen holding him hostage. The kidnappers had demanded the release of a fellow tribesman arrested on charges of sabotage.

Yemeni officials had said an influential member of a Yemeni tribe was negotiating Brooke's release, but they gave no details.

Following last month's shoot-out in which the four Western tourists - three Britons and one Australian - died, Yemen yesterday charged three Islamic militants with kidnapping and premeditated murder in the abduction of 16 Western tourists.

The prosecution demanded the



An undated file photo of British oil worker John Brooke, who was freed yesterday after having been kidnapped by Yemeni tribesmen on Saturday.

Communist predicts Yeltsin impeachment

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov said yesterday a vote to impeach President Boris Yeltsin in the State Duma lower house of parliament could come as early as February.

Zyuganov told a news conference that a Duma committee that is considering five impeachment charges against Yeltsin was working well and would present its findings soon.

However, under the 1993 constitution drawn up by Yeltsin, it is all but impossible to remove the president from office, and few politicians attach great significance to the proceedings.

Zyuganov said he believed that one of the five charges - an accusation that Yeltsin had illegally launched the catastrophic 1994-96 war against the breakaway Chechnya region - would garner the necessary 300 votes to pass in the 450-seat chamber.

Liberals, as well as Communists and nationalists, support the Chechnya charges. Four other charges against Yeltsin, ranging from bringing about the break-up of the Soviet Union to "genocide" against the Russian people, are supported only by Communists and their allies, who are short of a majority.

An impeachment vote is unlikely to lead to Yeltsin's dismissal, since it would require the support of parliament's upper house and the courts, which generally favor the Kremlin.

But a vote in the Duma could alter the political landscape, since if it succeeded in impeaching Yeltsin, the president would, in theory, be barred from dissolving parliament.

A Duma election is due at the end of this year and Yeltsin's term ends in the middle of next year.

Zyuganov also affirmed that his party, which holds the largest number of seats in the Duma, would continue to back the government's austere 1999 budget draft.

US planes again hit Iraqi targets

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - US warplanes yesterday attacked and hit several missile sites in northern Iraq after Baghdad's forces attempted to shoot down allied jets in the no-fly zone, a Pentagon spokesman said.

It was the third consecutive day the US had fired on Iraqi targets in the northern no-fly zone in an escalation of conflict between the two sides.

US Defense Department spokesman Lt. Col. Steve Campbell said US aircraft were doing routine patrols near the northern city of Mosul when they were "illuminated" by several Iraqi missile systems.

"There are indications that coalition aircraft were fired upon at least once by at least one Iraqi surface-to-air missile (SAM)," said Campbell. "The coalition air crews acted in self-defense," he said.

Campbell said the US pilots, in F-16 and F-15 warplanes, fired precision-guided bombs as well as High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles at their Iraqi targets.

Initial indications were that two of the precision-guided missiles directly hit the Iraqi SAM sites. Additional damage to Iraqi forces was still being assessed, Campbell said.

Campbell rejected an Iraqi report that Baghdad's air defenses had hit an "enemy" plane. The Iraqi report did not say whether the plane - either US or British - had been destroyed.

"We have no indication that this report [from Iraq] is correct," said Campbell, adding that all US planes and crew had returned safely to their base in Incirlik, Turkey, and there was no damage.

Britain, which monitors the no-fly zones along with US aircraft, also denied any of its planes had been hit.

"The Ministry of Defense can dismiss such suggestions. All aircraft returned safely," a ministry spokesman said.

Yesterday's clash in the northern exclusion area was the seventh in the Western-declared no-fly zones since the end of Operation Desert Fox last month, when US and British forces pounded Iraq during four days of air raids.

US scientists: Radon threat may be overstated

LONDON (Reuters) - The risks of dying from lung cancer caused by naturally occurring radon gas in the home may be much less than previously suspected, American scientists reported yesterday.

Researchers have been warning for the past 20 years of the dangers from alpha radiation given off by radon - a gas that bubbles into homes from uranium-bearing rocks underground.

The US National Academy of Sciences puts the radon death toll in the US at 18,000 a year - making it second only to smoking as a cause of lung cancer. Britain's death toll is calculated at 1,800 a year.

However, these estimates are calculated largely by extrapolating from deaths among uranium workers who have a huge exposure to radon.

But David Brenner and colleagues at the Center for Radiation Research in Columbia University, New York, believe that most domestic exposure to radon involves a single alpha particle per cell over a year, whereas the miners were frequently exposed to several particles per cell over a short period.

Reporting in *New Scientist* journal, Brenner argued that extrapolating risk from high to low exposure is wrong and that fears that thousands of people are dying from radon gas may be groundless.

Brenner exposed 250,000 mouse cells to a single alpha particle and found that only one in every 10,000 developed a cancerous mutation.

He said this was almost indistinguishable from the mutation rate with no exposure at all.

He then repeated the experiment using a random distribution of particles. In this case, the cells averaged three mutations per 10,000 cells.

Brenner concluded that most of the damage must have been done to cells exposed to more than one particle.

His results appear to support some recent studies that have failed to find a significant link between domestic exposure to radon and lung cancer.

Ruling soon on bid to trademark Diana's face

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain's trademark watchdog said yesterday it planned to rule within the next two months on whether Princess Diana's image could be officially registered and protected from unlicensed commercial exploitation.

A spokesman at the Patent Office said that contrary to newspaper reports last year, no decision had yet been made on an application by the Diana Memorial Fund to register her face as a trademark.

The Memorial Fund submitted 26 photographs of the late princess to the Patent Office in October 1997. It was seeking to protect her image from being used by unscrupulous traders on tacky souvenirs and to ensure that when her face was used, money raised should go to her favourite charities.

"There has been no decision as yet but we expect to come to a conclusion shortly, in the next couple of months. It is such an unusual application and has raised all sorts of questions that need clarification, which is why it has taken so long," said Patent Office spokesman Geoff Sargent.

British newspapers reported wrongly in July that the Patent Office had ruled that Diana's face should belong "to the world" and could not be registered as a trademark. Britain's *New Scientist* magazine reported that the Memorial Fund, set up in the wake of Diana's death in a Paris car crash in August 1997, planned to use the 26 photographs to construct a virtual reality model of her.

A Fund spokeswoman dismissed the report as rubbish. "There is no question of trying to do anything with virtual reality," a spokeswoman said.

The Memorial Fund has until now fought a losing battle against the makers of mugs, coins, dolls and t-shirts that have cashed in on the enormous appeal of Diana, who has proved almost more popular in death than in life.

The Fund's job is to funnel money given by the public to Diana's favorite charities, which include AIDS victims, the homeless and anti-landmine campaigns.

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Smaller and smarter

The sophistication of Israel's tanks, the prowess of its pilots, and the experience of its infantry are highly regarded in the world. But organizationally the IDF lags sadly behind other Western armed forces, and more importantly, behind the necessities dictated by the changing threats facing the nation. The test for the long overdue reforms announced by Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Shaul Mofaz will be in their implementation, and whether they mark the beginning rather than the end of the IDF's structural evolution.

After six months on the job, the reforms announced by Mofaz are potentially more sweeping than anything accomplished by his two predecessors, now both prime ministerial candidates. Knowing the experience of Ehud Barak, who did not deliver as much change as he had initially promised, Mofaz has wisely shied away from calling his proposals a "revolution." Under the new plan, the Ground Forces Command will be given the responsibility for "force building" of all the ground forces, rather than having this function split among the regional commands. The chief of General Staff, who now doubles as the general in charge of coordinating the army (the air force and navy have separate commands), would delegate a significant part of that role.

Other aspects of the plan include cutting some 2,000 positions in the professional military, including eight brigadier-generals and 20 colonels; replacing outdated tanks and artillery; and increasing incentives to keep skilled personnel in the military longer.

For years, the IDF has been saying it needs to become "smaller and smarter," and Mofaz's plan is clearly designed to move in this direction. Changes in the threats facing Israel, as well as changes in technology, society, and budgets all point in the same direction: a smaller, more sophisticated, more professional IDF.

The IDF knows that if the country faces another full-scale war, it will be nothing like the last one. 25 years ago, The Yom Kippur War was before the age of long-range missiles, before it was shown that even primitive Iraqi Scuds could reach Tel Aviv. Though we cannot abandon our historic reliance on reserve forces, neither can we plan on a smooth and quick reserve call-up in the event of war.

At the same time, the universal system of reserve duty has sprung leaks, as the IDF faces a glut of young draftees and Israelis become less tolerant of the inequalities created as the army becomes more selective. For the first time, the IDF recently announced that more draftees had

qualified and volunteered for combat units than could be absorbed, and part of the entering class would be postponed to a later draft. As the population grows and manpower needs shrink, this trend may continue.

Technology is perhaps the greatest force behind the "smaller and smarter" trend. Sophisticated weaponry can replace thousands of soldiers, and demands more skilled training to operate. As budgets shrink, the IDF must choose between the weapons it needs and the large, labor-intensive force structure it inherited.

In addition, technology has created whole new categories in both the threat and how Israel must respond to it. We are now surrounded by missiles that may not be accurate enough to use effectively against ground forces, but are accurate enough for wreaking havoc on the "home front." At the same time, even more sophisticated technology can be used to shoot down offensive missiles, as was primitively demonstrated by the Patriots during the Gulf War.

Anti-missile programs were long derided as "star wars" for ideological reasons during the Cold War, but neither the US nor Israel can afford a Luddite approach to national defense. Armies, tanks, and aircraft can be circumvented by missiles; and the range, accuracy, and warheads of missiles are becoming increasingly deadly.

In budget battles here and elsewhere, missile defense systems tend to fall between the cracks, and must compete with more standard military priorities, such as expensive fighter aircraft. Besides having a powerful military constituency, aircraft are more flexible. But in the end, aircraft alone cannot provide an adequate defense against missile attack.

In a sense, anti-missile systems such as the Arrow epitomize the high-tech, expensive, and unconventional future of modern warfare. A major test of Mofaz's reforms will be whether such systems, and the need to develop next-generation missile defenses, are given a higher budget priority than in the past.

In his statement introducing the reform program, Mofaz said, "We want to see an organization that learns and improves over time. I asked every battalion, brigade, and division commander to prepare a program for how the organization that he controls will advance and learn - from the lessons, the mistakes, and the errors - in order to improve."

Such a creative, evolutionary spirit could do wonders operationally, but it should be applied at the strategic level as well.

Full circle

URI DAN

In the mid 1950s, Lt.-Col. Ariel Sharon, paratroop commander and the father of the IDF's commando units, made a secret visit to France, to meet with the French paratroop command. At the time, little Israel was battling Palestinian terror supported by Egypt, which was armed with Soviet weapons.

Today, Sharon, who is now Israel's foreign minister and is

Jacques Chirac has tried somewhat to correct his ways since the 1970s, when he was close personal friends with Saddam Hussein and helped him build a nuclear reactor near Baghdad - the same Osirak reactor that Israeli precisely destroyed in June 1981.

But it's hard to forget the insults Chirac doled out to Israel during his visit to Jerusalem in October 1996, including a tongue-lashing

French aid once helped us win wars. It would behoove the French to be more helpful as we strive for peace

responsible for the crucial negotiations with the Palestinians, is making an official visit to France at the invitation of French foreign minister. One could say, figuratively, that Sharon has "come full circle." But in this case, the circle is real.

More than 40 years separate the two visits, but there is a connecting thread between them. Sharon charted the course and established the doctrine for the long and bitter battle against Palestinian terrorism. It was the Israeli accomplishments in this battle that gave the Palestinians their initial push towards negotiating with Israel. France's clandestine help and cooperation during the 1950s were important, not just to the Israeli paratroopers during the Suez operation in 1956, but also to the building of the young Israel Air Force and the Armored Corps.

Today, France could contribute to the diplomatic talks between Israel and the Palestinians. But unfortunately, unlike the US, official France is not behaving like an honest broker in this matter. Even as the French people, in the main, feel exceedingly friendly towards Israel, official France has sided with the Arab camp, and supports even the most extreme Palestinian demands.

It's true that French President to the Israeli security personnel who were protecting him in Jerusalem's Old City - an attack made deliberately to score points in the Arab world, and particularly with his friend, Yasser Arafat.

Sharon will try to explain to his French counterpart that while Israel obviously isn't requesting the same intimate clandestine ties that he remembers as paratroop commander, a more balanced French stance is crucial, particularly in this dangerous and critical time in the Middle East.

As it stands, France frequently seems to be identifying not just with the positions of Yasser Arafat, but also with those of Saddam Hussein, in opposition to US policy.

IN France, there are many who enjoy comparing the French-Algerian conflict to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, even though this is a totally mistaken comparison.

Here, we are talking about the security of the Jews, when the dispute is being conducted on a small strip of land in which two peoples, the Jews and the Palestinians, live on top of each other, as they certainly do in Judea and Samaria, in Galilee, in Jerusalem, or in Wadi Ara.

And while France did, in fact,

Dry Bones

MR. SHULDIG AND HIS DOG DOOBIE



leave Algeria. Algeria never really abandoned France, even though a big ocean separates them. There have been serious terror attacks in France, and even in the heart of Paris in recent years, that demonstrate this. And Algeria, which won its independence some 40 years ago, has become a center of unceasing bloodshed, carried out by the local versions of Ahmed Yassin and his ilk.

So it would be better for France to remember its own bitter experiences as it tries to force Israel to make unilateral concessions, whether it be in Lebanon, with Syria, in Gaza or in the West Bank. The very existence of the Jewish state is hanging in the balance.

There are apparently many in Paris who still believe in opinion

polls, even though they've misled the French in more than one previous election. Shimon Peres led in the polls in 1981, but they still ended up with Menachem Begin, and Peres remains the leading figure in the "polls" of the Left and the Palestinians, even though he was defeated by Binyamin Netanyahu in 1996.

After all, Peres, as he demonstrated in his address this week in Ramallah, continues to work at a feverish pace for the establishment of a Palestinian state. Ariel Sharon, even in Paris, is continuing his battle to strengthen the Jewish state.

For Sharon, the circle that hasn't yet been closed is the one that also began in Paris some 100 years ago - the Zionist circle that was drawn by the visionary Theodor Herzl.

The View From the East

DAUD KUTTAB

Accounting and accountability

Dr. Amin Majaj, a Palestinian pediatrician from Jerusalem, died last week.

Few outside of East Jerusalem made note of this important man, although he made major contributions to medicine with his research. Majaj was also the elected deputy mayor of East Jerusalem, who, along with the entire council, was sacked by Israel when it conquered the Palestinian areas in 1967, and extended the authority of its West Jerusalem city council to East Jerusalem.

While treating Palestinian refugees at the Lutheran Church's Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives, Majaj would conduct research in a small basement lab. Noting the blood weakness of many of the refugees he was treating, Dr. Majaj made a major breakthrough in research on Vitamin E. This breakthrough in the 1950s earned him a place in medical history, an article in *Time* magazine and a medal of honor from Jordan's King Hussein.

The Jordanian monarch also

appointed Majaj to the Jordanian parliament, a post he held until the 1980s, when Jordan severed its administrative ties with the West Bank, which had been part of the Hashemite Kingdom when Israel occupied it in June 1967.

When I heard that Majaj had died, I remembered an interview I had conducted with him more than 10 years ago. In that interview, he told me that the one session of parliament which he always made sure to attend was the session discussing the annual budget.

The annual budget has been the hot item of discussion this week in both Palestine and Jordan. In fact the role of the parliament - and therefore, the people - in approving the state budget was being studied by my daughter, Tamara, in her social studies class.

But studying an issue in school is one thing and the application on the ground is another. While in Jordan the years of parliamentary experience has produced a system of discussion and debate - albeit sanitized and restrained - the situation in Palestine is still not up to par.

After 30 years of occupation in which "the budget" for the Palestinian territories was considered a state secret, the arrival of the Palestinian National Authority promised to make things different. Three budgets ago, the elected representatives of the Palestinian people were excited to see, for the first time, a budget listing the expected income and expenses for the coming year.

To be able to see the budget, the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council committed themselves to approving it, as long as it was shown to them. At the time, there were a number of complaints about the expenses in the budget and there were direct accusations made about abusive spending by the executive.

The charges of corruption were broadcast on local television stations, and led to my arrest, due to my position as director of the Palestinian television station that was filming the parliament session.

Last year, members of the PLC complained that the annual budget was missing some important items

in the income category. They stressed that the representatives of the people have the right to know about and to approve all public income and spending. The executive was reprimanded for not declaring certain income.

This week, the PLC is expecting to review yet another annual budget. Word that the PA will only submit income figures and not expenses has raised the blood pressure of members of the legislature, who have summoned the Palestinian finance minister to demand an explanation. But the only explanation there could be for not submitting expenses is that there are things the Palestinian executive doesn't want the public to see.

Annual budgets are a reflection on where a country stands, and where it is going. If the Palestinian Authority is serious about its goal of declaring a state in May, it must submit a complete budget, which declares all its expected income and expenses for the coming year, and listen carefully to what the representatives of the people have to say about it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BEREAVED MOTHER

Sir, - In yesterday's *The Jerusalem Post* there is an article "Bereaved mother thrown out of Dan lobby." I am that bereaved mother. I would like to react to the spokesman for the Peres Center for Peace. I had a definite meeting set up with former president de Klerk. I did not barge into the dining room. I was given permission by a hotel staff member to be where I was. I did not raise my voice to anyone. I consider it a threat to be forcibly removed when one is surrounded by security and police.

This was a disgrace. This is against any human rights of a democratic society. This exemplifies peace?

JOYCE BOIM

Jerusalem.

UNQUALIFIED OLMERT

Sir, - Mayor Olmert's decision not to contest for national Likud leadership was wise indeed.

His accomplishments of appearing at all major organization functions and building more city roads, which only encourages more traffic, do not qualify him to be prime minister.

With but a year away from hordes of pilgrims swarming into Jerusalem, the mayor would do better to improve and encourage public transport and clean walking areas of automobiles and excrement.

CHAIM LANGERT

Jerusalem.

UNACCEPTABLE LIEBERMAN

Sir, - I would like to protest Avigdor Lieberman's outburst in which he expressed his contempt for the basic democratic institutions of our country.

I am utterly disgusted, as well as ashamed, to listen to somebody who tries to teach us - we the old immigrants and *subras* - who during the last sixty years have built this country from its inception to the present state.

Although neither I nor my parents were "princes" of the Likud or any other party, I consider myself a "princess" of the *velkes* who participated in the building of this country, volunteered for the British

army during World War II, and fought in our War of Independence.

We managed without help from the Jewish Agency, didn't go to ulpanim, and were not recipients of the generous financial assistance available to today's immigrants. At least I am glad my parents are no longer here to listen to the words of a man like Lieberman who does not belong here.

I hope that other people will raise their voices to protest the unacceptable utterances of Lieberman.

E. SAMUEL

Kfar Shmaryahu.

UNPRINCIPLED POLITICS

Sir, - There are two principles which predominate in arranging political alliances in Israel today. And they have nothing to do with the welfare of the state or its people.

These are: 1) Hitch your wagon to a star, dismiss any moral or ethical differences with your ally and; 2) Determine your alliance by what seat in the party's list and what position on the cabinet you are promised.

These politicians, who include most of those in the headlines, are nothing but political "hacks." Like any taxi driver, they will give a

ride to anyone who pays the price.

All the political flinching is not designed to create alliances which will bring social, economic and medical benefits to the people of Israel. Position and power is the goal.

Whatever happened to the "people of the Book" and the great principles which they contributed to the world? My immediate reaction is disgust and to say "a plague on all your houses."

DR. CARL LAMPNER

Jerusalem.

CIGARETTE ADVERTS

Sir, - I want to protest most strongly the cigarette advertisement on the December 11 back cover of *Time Out* showing attractive female students.

True, they are not actually smoking, but the connection to the cigarette

rettes alongside is not accidental. It makes the health warning at the bottom of the page look like a joke.

SARAH ALTAR

Kiryat Bialik.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On January 14, 1934, *The Palestine Post* published a full account of the activities and plans for the settlement of German Jews in Palestine. There were 1,500 German immigrants undergoing agricultural training and certificates for 450 children aged 15-17 had been received.

1949: *The Palestine Post* reported from Rhodes on the first joint meeting of Israeli and Egyptian delegations. President Chaim Weizmann assailed Britain for threatening Israel and called for Anglo-Jewish reconciliation.

25 years ago: On January 14, 1974, *The Jerusalem Post* reported

ed that one Israeli soldier was killed and a number wounded in one of the grave violations of the cease-fire. IDF commanders accused Egypt and Syria of having renewed the war of attrition in anticipation of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's meeting with President Sadat in Aswan.

Alexander Zvielti

1550 من الأصل

Perkins: the eternal Psycho

'Psycho' all but ruined Anthony Perkins career but made his reputation

By CHRIS KALTENBACH

It sits at Universal doubtless are hoping that lightning will strike twice with director Gus Van Sant's much-hyped remake of the Alfred Hitchcock groundbreaker that earned a ton of money for its studio (Paramount) in 1960.

Van Sant certainly wouldn't want a second lightning strike, what director doesn't want to be called a genius? And Anne Heche (cast here as Marion Crane) probably wouldn't mind a career as long and as steady as her predecessor in that fatal shower.

At least one person associated with *Psycho* 1998, probably wouldn't prefer that history not repeat itself. It's doubtful Vince Vaughn wants to become the next Anthony Perkins.

That *Psycho* was an irredeemably negative experience for generations from now, will still be talking about this performance as the murderously meek Norman Bates.

Geeky, before the term was invented, forever redefining the image of the boy next door (after *Psycho*, he was just as likely to be carrying a knife as a valentine), Norman Bates became a part of the world's pop-culture fabric.

And a huge albatross around poor Anthony Perkins' neck.

Before *Psycho*, Perkins was one of Hollywood's top young talents. Appearing with a part in 1956's *Perdition*, as a young soldier torn between his duty and his Cheyenne father (and for which he earned an Oscar nomination), Perkins had specialized in playing tortured, post-adolescent strugglers with their inner demons.

As the Boston Red Sox Jimmy Pesky in 1957's *Fear Strikes Out*, he struggled with mental illness; as a sheriff in *The Tin Star*, he was a young buck trying to match wits with Henry Fonda; as the salaried son of Bud Ives in *Under the Elms*, he vied with his father for the affections of Sophia Loren.

PERKINS was James Dean without the sense of danger; he could have played him in *Rebel Without a Cause* except that in that knife fight he would have gotten cut up real bad. (Come to think of it, he might have been better in the Sal Mineo role.) All of which made Perkins a star on the rise — and a natural to play Norman Bates, a mama's boy with an unfortunate twist.

Hitchcock, who knew talent when he saw it (even if he tended to dismiss actors as one of the least important parts of his pictures), realized Perkins' screen persona would make Norman a sympathetic, likable figure. Who would suffer with him as he tried to make small talk with beautiful Leigh, a woman clearly out of his league? Of course, it's precisely because of that identification with the character that the ending of *Psycho* comes as such a shock. Tall, gangly, wide-eyed, fumble-mouthed

Anthony Perkins, a killer? Wow. But Perkins' career never recovered from *Psycho*. Or, more precisely, it was never able to shake it off. His post-*Psycho* filmography is a series of frustrations. Producers, fearful that audiences would be unable to see past Norman Bates, refused to cast him in anything that didn't involve dementia and usually a knife.

Resisting such typecasting, he largely retreated from Hollywood. Among his few notable roles were *Pretty Poison* (opposite Tuesday Weld, who played the really psychotic killer this time) and John Huston's *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*. Instead, he concentrated on making films in Europe (*Goodbye Again*, *Phaedra*) and turning to the New York stage, working as both actor (the psychiatrist in *Equus*) and director.

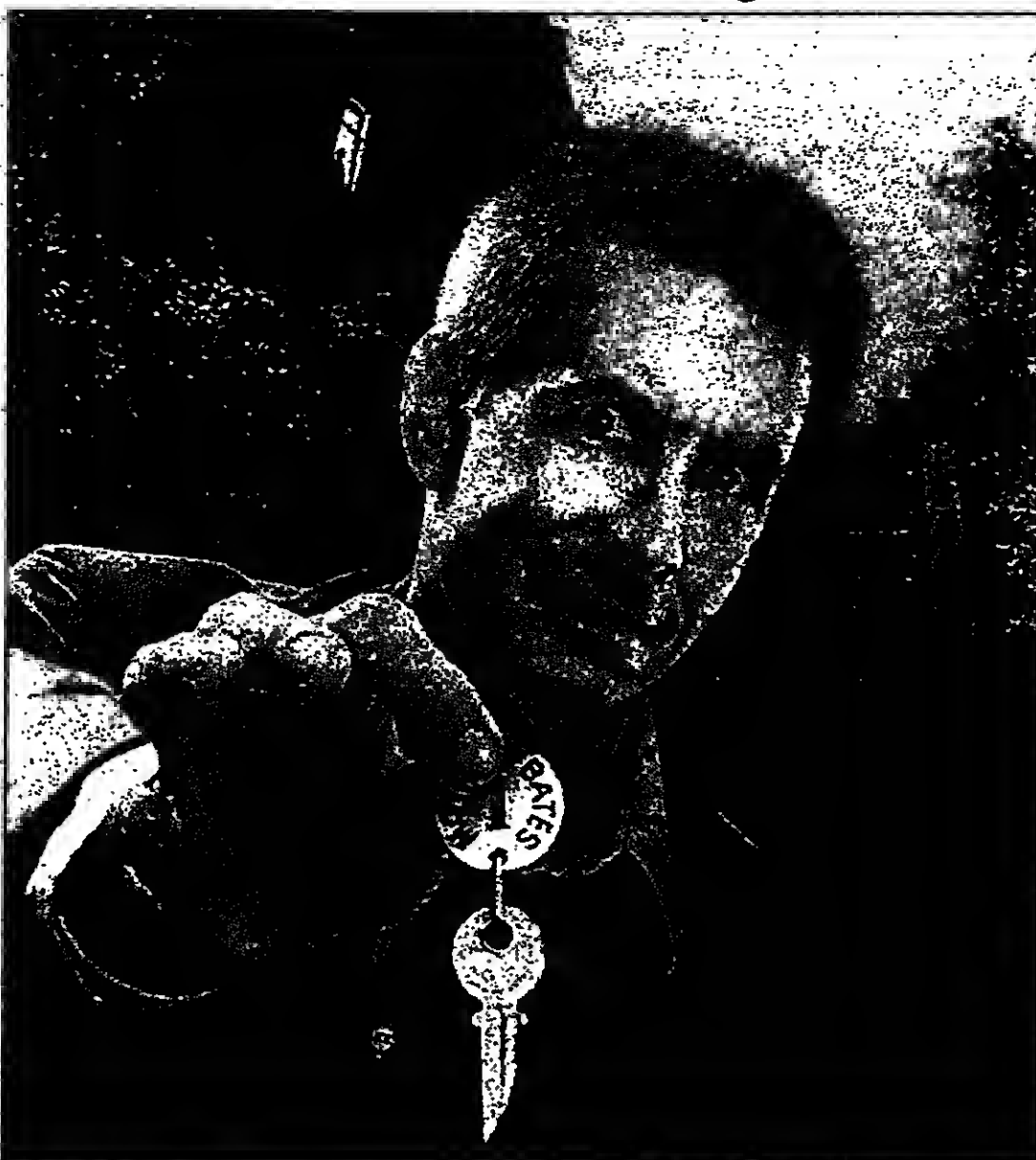
HIS career pretty much at a standstill, Perkins embraced Norman once again in 1983, finally heeding the call of all those curious moviegoers who, for 23 years, had been wondering, "Whatever happened to that Bates boy?" In *Psycho II*, Bates wins his release from the mental hospital and returns to run the Bates Motel. Unfortunately, Norman's not quite as cured as one might hope.

Also starring in the film were Meg Tilly, as a waitress at the local diner who takes a liking to Norman (and sort-of re-creates Leigh's famous shower scene, showing more skin but less visual panache); Dennis Franz, as a drunken boor who loves nothing better than to push Norman's buttons (bad move!); and reprising her role from *Psycho* — Vera Miles as Lila Crane, out to avenge the death of her sister, Marion.

Psycho II was perhaps better than anyone had a right to expect, and Perkins was convincing as a man unsuccessfully trying to live down his past (the parallels to his own situation must have caused a chuckle or two on the set). But the Perkins-directed *Psycho III*, with Diana Scarwid as a former nun who offers Norman a chance for salvation, and *Psycho IV: The Beginning*, with Henry Thomas as a young Norman and Olivia Hussey as his mother were dismal affairs.

Most offensive was *Psycho IV*, which had Perkins recounting all his grizzly deeds on a radio call-in show and revealing such tantalizing nuggets of info as the manner of Norman's father's death and his method of offing his mother. Even more disheartening was that it was written by Joseph Stefano, who was responsible for the original *Psycho*. But at least Perkins was working again, even if he was always playing the same psychotic role — think of his deranged, Bible-wielding preacher in Ken Russell's 1984 exercise in overindulgence, *Crimes of Passion*.

"I did feel I'd never escape Norman," Perkins told an interviewer in 1986. "But my wife pointed out to me that the more I would try to escape him, the more people come away convinced and reaffirmed that Norman and I were



Anthony Perkins (above) could never get rid of the Norman Bates image. Vince Vaughn (below) is unlikely to suffer the same fate in the remake of 'Psycho'.



very similar. So she said, 'Why don't you just give in to this and not fight it, and maybe people would say, Gee, that's funny, he didn't seem like Norman at all.'"

Anthony Perkins died Sept. 12, 1992, of complications from AIDS. His last role was in a TV film, *In the Deep Woods*, playing a creepy-looking guy who may or may not have been a serial killer. (The Baltimore Sun)

Psycho 1998 opens locally tonight

Hot tip

By DANIELA SCHEDLER

Tel Aviv

The choice pop stars are out tonight, filling the halls of Tel Aviv with song. Corinne Allal and Eras Tzur perform at the newer, bigger and better Barbi Club, starting at 10 p.m., way down on Salome St. in the south of the city. Call (03) 681-6757.

Tow-headed pop idol Dana Berger appears at the Heineken Haham Club, starting at 11 p.m. Call (03) 528-2174.

Moving from pop to jazz, catch the fusion of *Flamenco Jazz* with Candela this evening. These regulars at the Camelot Club will

up the late-night scene, starting at 11:30 p.m. Call 528-5222; 16 Shalom Aleichem.

For a different time altogether, slip into the sweet sounds of the French chansons. But music isn't all. This evening, devoted to the work of Jacques Brel and George Brassens, will include a lecture, reading and acting, as well as singing and playing.

All this at the Enav Cultural Center at Gan Ha'ir tonight, starting at 8. Call (03) 521-7763.

Beit Ariela, Tel Aviv's public library, is a hub of literary, visual and poetic stimulation this weekend.

Starting today at 10 a.m., Dorit Zilberman will host a meeting with the author Shifra Horn, and give a lecture as part of the series "Women, Men and Morals."

In the evening, Yisrael Bar Kochav will lecture on "Cinema of Dreams," as part of the series "The Magic of Dream." His lecture will address Bergman, Marx and Pinhas Sadeh; in the auditorium at 7 p.m.

At 8 p.m., the ever-eloquent poet Roni Somek gives a lecture in the poetry series, 25 Shaul Hamelech, (03) 691-0146.

For a mellow Wednesday night,

hear the songs and stories of Dudu Elharar at Habimah, starting at 8:30. Call (03) 526-6600.

A slightly more complex experience is to be had at *The Arab Barzilai Show* at ZOA House tonight. This promises entertainment, alongside a wall-to-wall dose of social analysis, as Barzilai gives her own interpretation of men, women and what goes on between them. Starting at 9, (03) 695-9341.

Looking for something a little more alternative? Hasimta Theater holds two performances tonight. At 9, see *Wallpaper* by Yigal Even-O; at 9:30, *The Fall* is playing. 8 Mazal Hadagim.

Jerusalem

Music and musicals aplenty are available this weekend in Jerusalem. The Pargod Theater presents the melodies, as *The Shoes* perform their rock 'n' roll tonight, starting at 9 p.m. Call (02) 625-8819. Don't miss out on the Friday afternoon jam session, starting at 1 p.m.

Meanwhile, Habimah hits Jerusalem as *The Dybbuk* lands at the Jerusalem Theater. S. Ansky's tale of possession mingles with

love, broken promises and vengeance from beyond the grave — definitely family entertainment. At the Jerusalem Theater starting at 8:30 p.m. Call (02) 560-5755.

And Points Beyond

Ness Ziona is the site of Habimah's *The Spanish Garden* tonight, at Heichal Hatarbut starting at 8:30. Call Habimah for details (03) 620-7777.

The Naked City is making the rounds, and is found tonight in Netanya. This piece, choreographed by Rami Be'er, has become a Kibbutz Dance Company classic. At Heichal Hatarbut, at 4 Raziell. Call (03) 861-2453.

North meets south, as Haifa Theater brings *Ghetto* to Beersheba tonight. This play, by Yehoshua Sobol, is about the doomed Vilna Ghetto theater; anyone who has not yet seen this very good production should try to do so. Here's the channel. Starts at 8:30 p.m., at Heichal Hatarbut. Call (04) 860-0500.

Meanwhile, the Beersheba Municipal Theater itself is out of town, gone to Pardess Hanna

tonight, for a performance of *Black Moon*, a play about Beduin. It starts at 8:30. Call (07) 620-6230.

Finally, catch the Cameri in Tiberias, with one of the year's most successful plays, *The Rebels*, tonight at 8:30 at Heichal Hatarbut. Call (03) 527-9888 for details.

Television

There's plenty to do if you don't want to do anything; that is, if watching TV seems like the best option of all for a quiet winter's night.

The Russia House, with Sean Connery, Michelle Pfeiffer and Klaus Maria Brandauer, from the John Le Carré novel, is on Second Showing tonight at 10.

Dressed to Kill, a Brian DePalma film from 1980, is showing on Channel 2 tonight, starting at 11:40. Actors Kate Gordon, Angie Dickinson and Michael Caine perform in this Hitchcock-reminiscent thriller-and-chills flick.

Le Beau Mariage, a French comedy for the lighter spirits, shows at 10:30 tonight, on Channel 33.

Allenby swings again

By DORIS LEMOR

Some DJs and European party-circuit people consider Allenby 58 to be the city of Europe's top nightclubs. And today Tel Aviv locals don't have to fly in, they can hang on the 4th floor.

Allenby 58 is located in the old Allenby movie theater, one of two that screened movies to packed houses in the long, gone days of Allenby's glory. These days the crowds out Thursday, Friday, or Saturday nights gather around each of the club's two small entrances, hoping to get in. On Thursdays you can glimpse famous faces, like those of supermodel Alon Kishon, actor Yair Lotan and his girlfriend Ollie, or Ramon Avit Gimmel star, model Yoav Zucker. Michael, deceptively fragile and beautiful, stands guard over the main entrance with several stalwart bouncers who enforce her decisions — however capricious — as to who gets in and who doesn't. Possess the necessary degree of "cool" and it's Open Sesame. "Cool" means gorgeous, or at least well taken care of, and expensively dressed. On Thursdays and Fridays it means over the age of 22 and on Saturdays it means over 18.

If you pass the test it costs NIS 60 to get in, but it's well worth it because Allenby has recently been renovated. The room on the first floor is small and more intimate than that on the second floor. It has a dance floor, an average-sized bar, a very good-looking DJ, and the inevitable paparazzi seeking an incongruous shot of the famous folk making out. Hip-hop and contemporary pop is the thing on this floor, and depending on the DJ you can even hear '80s rock 'n' roll. Along the back wall is a red leather chill-out couch sunk into the wall, where you can find anything from tired party-goers to passion in full swing.

On the other side of the room, stairs lead up to the second level. The larger the floor, the more difficult it is to maneuver up or down the stairs. If you manage to get to the second floor in one piece, the volume of the electronic music is almost deafening, and the bass vibrates through your entire body. The music on this floor is entirely electronic, boasting the latest European hits.

The second floor is large, with an elevated bar the size of an average Tel Aviv apartment and Twiggy-type bartenders who serve alcoholic drinks and popular cocktails. Most of the celebrities hang out on the bar's platform to see and be seen, say their hellos, and pose for the photographers.

Opposite the bar area, and across the enormous dance floor, is a stage where performance artist Hziq Niri puts on avant-garde productions dealing with sexual identity (or lack of) and moving art designs. These productions, with their *Rocky Horror Picture Show* appeal, are quite a hit. The stage is also used for rock concerts and guest DJs from Europe. During the recent renovations, a third floor was added to the club. This floor offers a more private area with low lighting and eight couch-type seating arrangements.

The cloakroom is also upstairs, as well as a huge round balcony that provides a full view of the entire dance floor below. But if you are looking for your mates and hope to see them from the third floor, don't even try it, the lighting is too dim and the smoke too thick.

Allenby 58 is open from Thursday until Saturday and for special occasions, opening nights are announced ahead of time. Entrance is from the age of 22 on Thursday and Friday, 18 on Saturday. Cover charge is NIS 60, and there are no exceptions. On special occasions the price is higher.

Allenby 58, 58 Allenby Street, Tel Aviv.

Books on my mind

Actor Harel Noff believes in getting involved on and off the stage

"I remember my first acting class. I walked in and everyone was screaming and running around, and I thought 'these people are nuts!' That is one of my scariest memories," says actor Harel Noff, who's a sort of New Age Renaissance man.

He works with politicians and even created a "parliament for the arts," somehow managing to go from being a writer/actor to a politician without losing the purity of his desire to create.

Noff was injured during his army service in a special unit and spent the rest of his service in the IDF Theater. "I was the 'king,' I mean I had tons of fans, the chicks loved me. It was a good time in my life," he recalls contentedly.

After the army, Noff flew to America for five months, then returned to Israel to study theater at Tel Aviv University. From there he went on to study on a scholarship at the Lee Strasberg school in New York.

While in New York, Noff did "bit parts, you know five-liners?" in productions such as *Murder She Wrote*, *Bay Watch*, *Route 66* and *Robin Hood, Men in Tights*. At one point, Noff went home for a visit and played in *Love Games*, one of Israel Television's first series.

Now 30, he's playing lead roles in *Deadly Fortune*, *Ramot Aviv Gimmel* and *Hafuch*. Noff also teaches a course called Acting on Camera in his own school, at Beit Zvi, at the College of Administration and to MKs at the Knesset.

Noff writes scripts, and has written a book called *When Mario Taught Me How to Dream*. Very inspired by literature, he talks about his favorite books.

1. *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole
"For years he tried to publish this book and when he finally did get it published, he fought to the end and I admire this. This is a very smart and very funny book. It is a must for everyone. I am very inspired by this book. I like stories about people who keep trying."

2. *Aaron and the Purple Pencil* by Samuel Crockett
"This is a children's book, but I love it dearly. It is a story about a boy who draws his own world



Eyal Landman

with a purple pencil, then he gets lost in it temporarily. Finally, he remembers that he can see the moon from his window, draws a moon in a window and finds his way home. I can empathize with people who are unsatisfied with the way that things are happening and then decide to make a change."

3. *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach
"This is a very smart analogy about trying to always go further than expected. I can relate to this seagull, he is an outcast because he dares. I feel strongly about going all the way. I respect that in a person, or in this case a seagull."

4. *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand
"I think that this is the same sort of story. People who don't compromise and go all the way for their beliefs, even if it means living the hard way. It also talks about the ultimate, uncompromising love. I believe that this exists."

5. *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway
"This is romantic in a way, and also about people who don't give up. Actually all of these books deal basically with the same thing in a different way and that is going all the way for what you believe in. My motto comes from the anthem of a youth group of revolutionaries: 'To Conquer the Mountain or to Die.' The meaning is very self-explanatory — follow your dream."

—Sonie Lemor

Weekender Food & Drink Crazy about cocoa

By ERICA MARCUS

Like all renaissances, the current vogue for hot chocolate harks back to an earlier golden age, in this case, 17th-century Europe. In the royal courts of France, Spain and England, hot-chocolate-obsessed aristocrats drank it for breakfast and it was de rigueur to serve when well-heeled guests came round during the afternoon.

But the origins of chocolate far predate this. According to Carol Bloom, author of *All About Chocolate*, chocolate was first drunk by the Aztecs in pre-Columbian Mexico. The Aztecs roasted cocoa beans, then ground them up and mixed them with water. "This hot chocolate was nothing like what we know," said Bloom. "It was bitter and fatty. When Cortez brought cocoa home with him, the Spanish found it too bitter for their tastes so they added sugar and cinnamon and other spices."

The Spanish tried to keep their recipe a secret but within a few decades, hot chocolate had leaked all over Europe. The prevailing Spanish-style form of chocolate was a solid bar made of hulled, ground cocoa beans (in chocolate lexicon: chocolate liquor) plus sugar and spices. This bar would be melted down and mixed with water, but the resultant liquid needed constant frothing lest the fat rise to the surface forming an unattractive scum. The problem was that cocoa beans are high in fat (which we call cocoa butter), and until someone figured out a way to extract it, chocolate remained a labor-intensive and unstable ingredient.

Relief came in 1828 when Dutchman Coenraad Van Houten invented a method for extracting most of the fat from chocolate liquor. This operation, which yielded cocoa butter and cocoa powder, heralded the modern chocolate era; for the first time, chocolate makers could control the amount of fat in their product. Van Houten also invented a process by which cocoa powder was treated with alkaline to deepen the color, mellow the flavor and ease dispersion in water. In honor of its inventor, this method is known as Dutch-process.

Since then, savvy restaurateurs and cafe proprietors the world over have recognized the ability of good hot chocolate to bring in the customers.

Chris Gimble, a spokesman for



Starbucks, sang the praises of hot chocolate. "It's a handcrafted beverage that appeals to the consumer who doesn't like coffee... or who just isn't in the mood for coffee." Starbucks makes its hot chocolate with steamed milk and the same chocolate syrup (ingredients are classified) that goes into its caffe mocha.

BASIC HOT COCOA

1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup water
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
3 cups milk
In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine sugar with water. Bring to a simmer, shaking pan occasionally, until sugar is completely dissolved. Remove from heat and add cocoa powder, whisking until it is completely dissolved. Add milk and place over medium-low heat. Whisk constantly until mixture is very hot, but don't let it boil. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

THE MAIDSTONE ARMS' HOT CHOCOLATE

1/4 pound high-quality semisweet chocolate, finely chopped
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup light or dark corn syrup

1/2 cup sugar
2 Tbsp. butter, softened
6 to 8 cups milk (or half and half or, what the heck, cream)

Place chopped chocolate in a heat-proof bowl. In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, combine water, corn syrup and sugar. Bring just to a boil and pour immediately over the chocolate. Whisk until chocolate is melted and completely integrated, then whisk in butter.

(At this point the mixture can be refrigerated for up to a month.) Place chocolate mixture and milk in heavy saucepan over medium heat. Whisk constantly until very hot but not boiling. If desired, top with whipped cream and a dusting of cocoa powder. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 to 6 servings. For an individual 300-gr. serving, use 2 heaping tablespoons of the chocolate base, or to taste.

This recipe from Carol Bloom's *All About Chocolate* recreates the rich beverage served at Angelina, the famous tea salon in Paris. This hot chocolate isn't as sweet as you may be accustomed to; you can add sugar at the table, if desired.

PARISIAN HOT CHOCOLATE

2 cups milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup unsweetened Dutch-processed cocoa powder
180 grams bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate, very finely chopped

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
Garnish
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tsp. superfine sugar

In a medium-size heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine the milk, cream and cocoa powder. Warm over medium heat, stirring to dissolve the cocoa. Add the chopped chocolate and stir until it melts completely. Bring mixture to a simmer, but do not boil. Return the heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes, stirring. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Stir mixture to cool briefly, then ladle into serving cups.

With an electric mixer or by hand, whip the cream until frothy. Add sugar and whip until cream holds soft peaks. Place a dollop of cream on top of each serving of hot chocolate. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

(Newsday)



By PHYLLIS GLAZER

Phyllis' Tips

Cream Desserts manufactured by Nestlé-Motta. The first in this new line is an ice-cream cake, available in two flavors - Vanilla-Chocolate with chocolate shavings and Cappuccino-Vanilla with chocolate syrup.

They are actually more ice-cream logs than cakes. The manufacturers have also decided that putting these cakes in blue cartons with gold edges makes the inside product look more luxurious for consumers. The cakes serve eight each and weigh 350 gr. They sell for NIS 13.90. I'd say "Premiere" is a pretty fancy name for iced low-fat milk with sugar, vegetable fat and milk powder, and while the chocolate syrup really has chocolate and cocoa in it, the ice cream itself is flavored with "tiramisu," which is a cheap chocolate substitute, dubious flavoring and aromatic materials, as well as additional emulsifiers. Since I avoid *ersatz* products, this is not one that I would add to my freezer.

Pretty Dumb (avoid)

The Osem-Nestlé conglomerate has just released its first chocolate candy snack in Israel, "designed only for children" (who don't know any better) - Smarties, a distant cousin to the M&M.

How do you sell pure junk to kids? The manufacturers are trying to convince kids that only "smart" kids eat Smarties - which supposedly give you strength and energy, and help you solve difficult questions at school. (Can you believe it? If they really do come out with this campaign, we should all write to the company, with a copy to the Food Board of the Ministry of Health, to complain!)

On each package top there is a letter of the alphabet in English, and the kids can collect all 26. In Britain, the company claims, the package tops serve to teach

English in schools, and since 1985 the British Nestlé company pushes its products by offering "The Smarties Book Prize" for writing and drawing.

Smarties have a long history too. They were first created as "chocolate beans" in 1937 in Scotland. In 1997, Smarties sales were £49 million and there were 750,000 packages made in the York factory every day, with other factories in Hamburg, the Far East, Australia, Canada, and South Africa, among other countries. Smarties take 6.5 hours to create in the factory, during which time the little drop of chocolate is dipped into 34 different powders and coatings.

And here's the rub: As it turns out, you don't have to be smart to buy Smarties, you have to be totally unaware of the effect of artificial food colorings on your children's health, because this candy contains a plethora of artificial food colorings, which could cause problems in people who are allergic. There are dubious flavoring materials as well.

If you still want to buy them, they're sold for NIS 2.50 a container, NIS 7.5 for a package of three tins, and NIS 16.95 for a bag of mini-Smarties.

Chokoflakes (avoid)

Are your kids not getting enough sugar lately? Not enough unidentified flavoring and aromatic materials in their diet? Then why not start their morning off with "Chokoflakes," - imported by Osem - made with corn and three different kinds of sweeteners, hydrogenated fat, chocolate and 12 added vitamins and minerals.

Despite the added vitamins and minerals, this is not the way I would like my kids to start their day. Enough said. Sells for a whopping NIS 24.50. For what? Mainly sugar.



By PHYLLIS GLAZER

We have a myrtle bush and we picked all the myrtles, washed them and packed them in the freezer. They're a bit bitter. Can you please tell me how to freeze them and how to use them?

- Sarah Orenstein, Tel Aviv

I have never used myrtle in cooking, and wasn't aware of its use in food until you mentioned it. So I called 88-year-old Ya'acov Lishansky, a veteran food expert, and he told me that he makes pomegranate myrtle wine, among other things. I would suggest you pick up his book *Hanutzim* ("Pickles") published by Modan, for a few ideas.

I shook out sweet paprika all

over a dish and discovered that it was full of little bugs. Needless to say my dish had to be thrown out. How did this happen and how can I prevent this from happening to all my spices?

- Suzanne Libenson, Givat Shmuel

Ground spices contain oils which can turn rancid or attract bugs, especially those stored in a light or warm place (like near the stove). It can also depend on where you buy them, how long the store has held them, and how much time has elapsed between the time you bought them and how often you use them.

If you don't use spices often, store them in the refrigerator or freezer. Make sure they are far from the stove. Since that awful experience, I'd suggest you check all your spices, throw out or return to the store those that have "visitors," and give a second check just before you sprinkle.

Another possibility is to store a bay leaf or a couple of whole cloves in the spice canisters. Bugs

hate them.

Some few years back, limes were plentiful in season. So what has happened to them? Do you know of a place between Tel Aviv and Haifa, where I can buy limes this year, or next season? I'm planting a lime tree on Tu B'Shvat, but what do I add to my brandy and soda in the interim?

- Joe Glaz, Tel Aviv

There are always limes available in Israel around September - about the same time as the yellow Barbi dates. Since most people don't know what they are, greengrocers call them "green lemons" to get them off the shelves. It's actually easy to get confused because they are slightly more oblong, like a lemon, than the round type of lime.

I've bought them in season in the souk and at my neighborhood grocery store, but one place you're sure to find them in season is at the boutique vegetable store, Superpi, across the street from the Superol on Arlosoroff Street in Tel Aviv.

Yes, we have the bananas

By RONNIE FEIN

Feeling chubby, broke and blue? Eat a banana. Earth's best post-holiday gift - from its cheerful, biodegradable, bright yellow wrap to its sumptuous pulp. The lavishness is nature's come-on, enticing you to eat, knowing that one banana has only about 90 calories and is 99 percent fat-free. Bananas are also one of the richest sources of potassium. And nestled within the pale, tender flesh are plenty of vitamins A, B6 and C.

Bananas are cheap to boot, and you can find them everywhere. They are a quick source of energy, which can pick up your spirits when you're feeling sluggish. And they contain serotonin, which can make you feel good on a down day.

No wonder the Koran refers to the banana plant as the "tree of paradise," and its botanical name, *Musa sapientum*, means "fruit of the wise man." Legend has it that ancient East Indian sages meditated beneath the leaves of the banana plant - those huge green leaves undoubtedly kept the hot sun away from the thinkers.

Most people enjoy bananas raw, which brings up the matter of exactly when the fruit is ripe for eating. In 1945, in an effort to give bananas a designer label, the United Fruit Company created Chiquita Banana, a banana-cum-Carmen Miranda-type Latin dancer.

Chiquita, swinging hips samba-style, sang: "I'm Chiquita Banana and I've come to say, 'Bananas have to ripen in a certain way; When they are flecked with brown and have a golden hue / Bananas taste the best and are the

best for you."

This catchy song first hit radio audiences, continued for years on TV, and helped make the banana one of America's most popular fruits.

It also gave the definitive answer to the ripeness issue. Brown banana spots means the starch has converted to sugar and the flesh is enticingly sweet. Those who like the fruit firmer and not-so-sweet prefer a banana with clean, bright yellow peel that's slightly green at the tips.

Ripe bananas, brown-flecked or green-tipped, have merit beyond eating out-of-hand. Toss some slices with other fruits such as grapes, apples, pears and melon (topped with a bit of unflavored yogurt mixed with maple syrup or orange juice) or lend them to a salad with greens, chili peppers and walnuts (drizzled with a small amount of orange-flavored vinaigrette dressing).

Bananas are a healthy substitute for jelly in a peanut butter sandwich. For dessert, a banana is a classic with ice cream, hot fudge sauce and whipped cream, or placed beneath vanilla custard for banana cream pie.

Ripeness has a different meaning when it comes to cooking with bananas. The all-green bananas can be used in a stew. Flecked bananas, and even over-ripe brown bananas, are fine for cakes, waffles, quick breads, puddings and beverages. The ones with the green tips are best for sauteing, baking and broiling.

Peel and slice the bananas lengthwise and bake them, covered with a tiny bit of butter, brown sugar and fruit juice. To make a splashy dessert, saute the



bananas, flambéed with rum. Or brush them with melted butter, sprinkle with cinnamon sugar and grill them quickly.

Chiquita not only told us when to eat bananas, but how to keep them: "But bananas love the climate of the very, very tropical equator. So you should never put bananas in the refrigerator."

Actually, refrigerated bananas last longer but the skins turn dark brown and the flesh feels softer, which can be off-putting. Either way is fine. So it turns out that bananas are tasty, healthy, cheap and sturdy. As the song goes: "It's

impossible to beat them."

Bananas give the following recipes their main appeal:

BANANA CREAM PIE

1/2 cup sugar
6 Tbsp. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups milk
3 egg yolks
1 tsp. vanilla extract
3 bananas
1 fully baked 23-cm. pie crust
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 cup whipping cream
1 tsp. sugar

Place the 1/2 cup sugar, flour and salt in a saucepan. Stir in enough milk to make a paste and place the pan over moderate heat. Add the remaining milk gradually, cooking for about 6 to 8 minutes, or until the mixture thickens to the consistency of yogurt.

Beat the egg yolks in a small bowl and gradually add about one cup of the hot milk mixture. Mix the ingredients and return them to the saucepan. Cook the mixture for 2 to 3 minutes over low heat. Do not let the mixture come to a boil. Remove the pan from the heat. Cool the custard slightly, then

stir in vanilla extract.

Slice the bananas about 1 cm. thick and place the slices in a single layer inside the pie crust. Sprinkle the bananas with lemon juice. Cover the bananas with the custard. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until the pie is chilled.

Whip the cream and teaspoon of sugar until soft peaks form. Spread whipped cream on top of the pie; serve. Makes 8 servings.

FLAMBEED BANANAS

3 Tbsp. butter
6 Tbsp. dark-brown sugar
4 ripe bananas, peeled and sliced in half lengthwise
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground allspice
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 cup rum, preferably dark rum

Heat the butter in a saute pan over moderate heat. When the butter has melted and looks foamy, add the sugar and blend it in. Add the banana slices, turning them to coat the surface with the sugar mixture. Sprinkle with cinnamon, allspice and ginger. Cook for about 2 minutes or until the bananas are hot.

Warm the rum in a small pan, ignite the rum and pour the flaming liquid over the bananas. Shake pan until the flames die down. Serve immediately topped with ice cream. Makes 4 servings.

BANANA PECAN BREAD

2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup sugar

2 eggs

3 very ripe bananas
3 Tbsp. milk
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1/2 cup raisins

Preheat the oven to 175 degrees. Grease a 23 x 12 x 7 cm. loaf pan. Sift the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and nutmeg into a bowl and set it aside.

Beat the vegetable oil and sugar with a hand mixer or electric mixer set at moderate speed for 2 to 3 minutes or until the mixture is light and fluffy.

Add the eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Mash the bananas until they are mushy and add them. Beat the mixture thoroughly to incorporate the bananas.

Gently stir in the flour mixture, stirring only enough to moisten the dry ingredients and blend them in. Gently stir in the milk, vanilla extract, nuts and raisins. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake the bread one hour or until a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean.

Cool the bread in the pan 15 minutes. Remove the bread from the pan and let it cool on a cake rack. Makes one loaf of bread.

BANANA LASSI

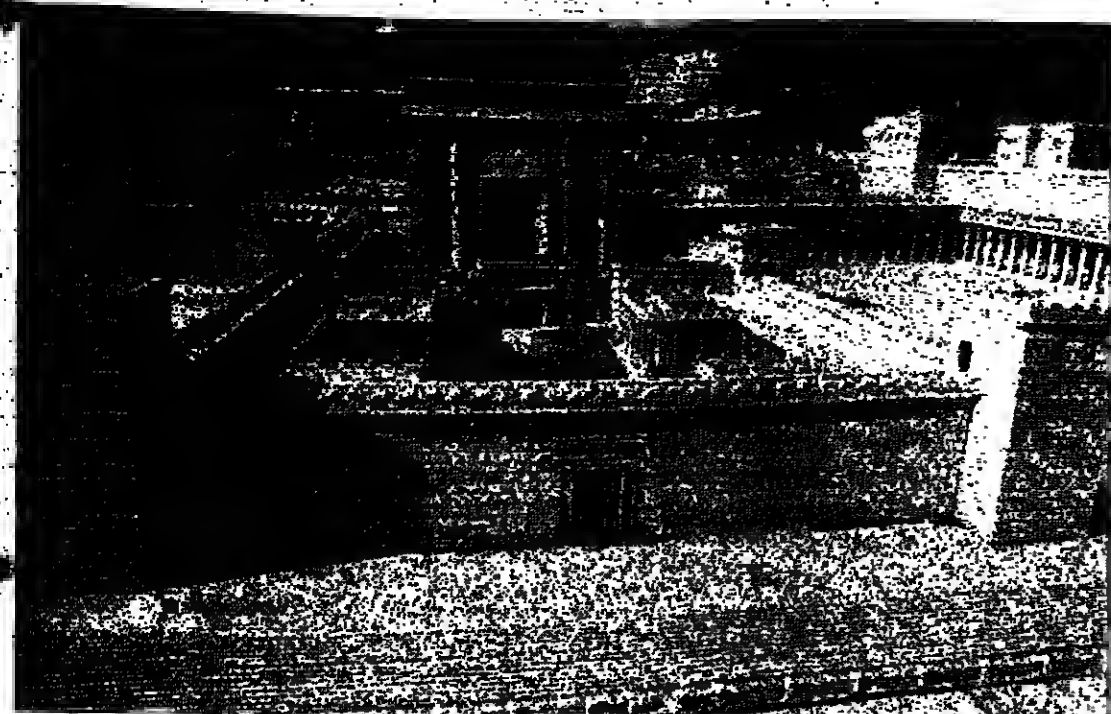
1 cup plain yogurt, low-fat or nonfat
1 ripe banana, sliced
3 ice cubes
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
Place ingredients in a food processor or blender and whirl until ice is completely crushed and mixture is smooth, thick and foamy. Makes one drink. (The Stamford Advocate)

The Jerusalem Post Thursday, January 14, 1999

11

The Second Temple in all its splendor

Weekender Travel



The superbly constructed model of Second Temple Jerusalem depicts the steps leading into the Temple itself, toward the Holy of the Holies. (Photos: Ariel Jerolimski)



The model reveals the period when the Roman Empire destroyed both the Temple and the city.

Built largely with materials used at the time of the Temple — Jerusalem limestone, copper, wood and iron — the model has a scale of 1:50, meaning that 2 cm. equals one meter, and an average man, in scale, would measure 3.5 cm.

From the observation platform at the "northern" end of the model, we can see how the vulnerable north (the only side without a sharp valley), was defended by three walls. The Third Wall, which tremendously expanded the area of the city to the north (toward modern downtown Jerusalem), was begun around 40 CE and was completed by Jewish rebels in 66 CE, as the anti-Roman revolt began.

The Second Wall, which lines up roughly with the northern wall of today's Old City, was the perimeter in Herod's time. From the north we can see clearly how the immense Temple Mount platform (about 144 dunams) and the Temple itself dominated the cityscape.

At the northwest corner stood the Psephinus Tower, presumed to be about 35 m. tall, and located roughly where the Russian Compound is today. Josephus claimed that on a clear day the Mediterranean Sea could be seen from here.

The western section of the Third Wall ran along the Ben-Hinnom Valley toward what is today Jaffa Gate. From here can be spotted two sites identified with the crucifixion and burial of Jesus: the Protestant Garden Tomb, near the northern edge of the Second Wall (outside today's Damascus Gate), and a quarry to the west of the Second Wall where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands, a spot venerated by Catholics, Greek Orthodox and other denominations.

From the west we can also see the rectangular Pool of Bethesda, still extant today and known erroneously as Hezekiah's Pool. Herod also constructed a remarkable aqueduct and tunnel system which, starting from a series of springs south of Bethlehem, zigzagged across the buckled contours of the hills for 68 km. while dropping a mere 90 m. and ultimately bringing water right to the Temple Mount.

AT THE western gate, where



Jaffa Gate now stands. Jerusalem's three walls ran near each other, and Herod heavily fortified this area with three towers, ranging in height from 27 to 45 m., which he named after a brother (Phasael), a friend (Hippicus), and one of his wives, Mariamne, of Hasmonean descent.

He loved Mariamne dearly, but killed her and the two sons she bore him as his craving for power overwhelmed him. (This ruler, remember, when on his deathbed in Jericho, ordered that Judea's nobles be killed upon his death, to assure that, as the historian Josephus quotes him, "all Judea and every family will weep for me.")

When the Romans captured and destroyed Jerusalem, the general Titus ordered that these towers remain standing, to show how strong the city he conquered had been.

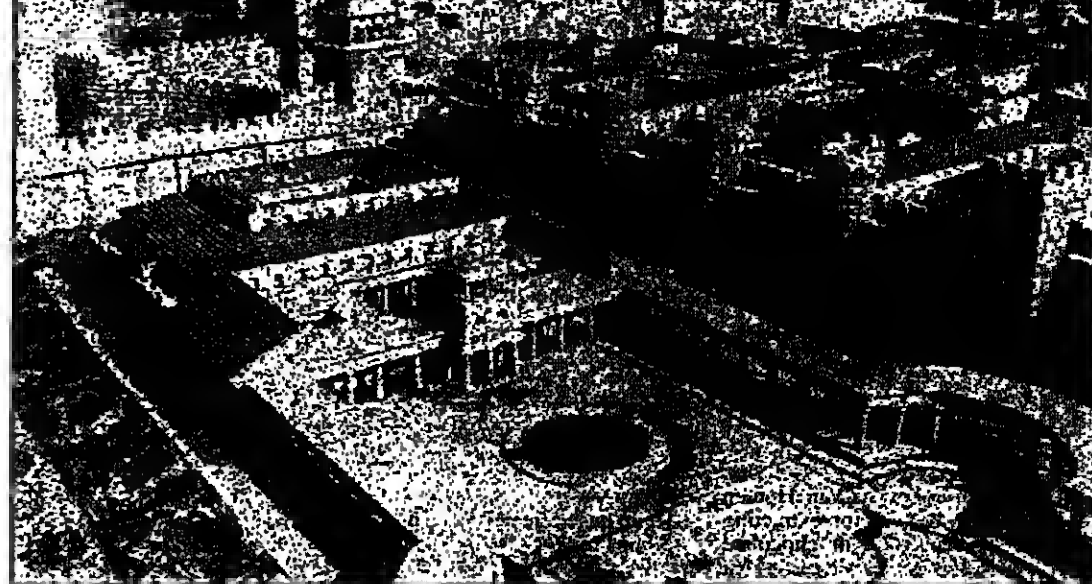
South of these towers, bordered by the First Wall, stretched Herod's long palace complex, with banquet halls, hundreds of guest rooms, baths, ponds, porticos, all in the finest Roman style, down to the bronze figurines which spouted water.

To the east of this palace ran the well-planned, elegant Upper City, the city's version of Beverly Hills, with a fancy market and the spacious, luxurious homes of the old Hasmonean aristocracy and the king's proteges, and the more powerful among the priests.

Josephus reported that, as the Romans rolled over the city, the sewers and channels facing the Upper City provided refuge and then graves for thousands of Jews.

Following the model's southern wall, you can see a monument which Herod built (on what is now Mt. Zion) marking the purported site of King David's tomb.

Moving east along the First Wall and southern border of the city, we approach the Lower City, where poor, heavily taxed and suffering families lived in small, cramped houses terraced down the slopes of the central Tyropoeon Valley.



(Top) Behind Bayit Vagan's Holyland Hotel, first century Jerusalem still stands in its moment of glory, at a scale of 1:50; (inset) The model was built largely with materials used at the time of the temple — Jerusalem limestone, copper, wood and iron.

Here an industrial quarter was found, and here probably flowed the raw sewage from other parts of the city.

Beyond, to the north, can be seen the immense Temple Mount, which connected — nominally at least — the various factions and classes of the deeply divided city. We can see the arch-supported bridge that spanned the central valley, carrying priests and water to the Temple precinct, and the magnificent staircase and arch (Robinson's Arch) at the southwest corner, leading people up to the Temple's administrative center.

Here, in the southern sector of the model, have also been built, on presumed but unproven sites, a hippodrome and the palace of Helena, the queen of the eastern kingdom of Adiabene, who converted to Judaism and moved to Jerusalem to serve the poor.

WE MOVE north along Jerusalem's eastern wall, bordering the Kidron Valley, toward the Temple Mount.

The Hulda Steps leading up to the Temple Mount, the tunnels

which penetrated it and opened up to the Temple precinct, and the Temple itself (probably one-third bigger in overall bulk than the Dome of the Rock which sits on the plot today), are all visible in clear and understandable detail.

Evident is the concentric system of courtyards, each more exclusive and more holy than the last, the steps on which the Levites stood and sang the Songs of Ascent, the altar, and the steps leading into the Temple itself, toward the Holy of Holies in the western end of the structure.

And in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount stood the Antonia Fortress, where, in Christian tradition, Pontius Pilate judged Jesus, where Roman sentries monitored the Jewish ceremonies, and from where those sentries could, in times of tension, pour out and deploy along the roof of the porticos surrounding the Temple Mount.

During the tightening siege of Jerusalem, the Roman legions crumbled the southern wall of that fortress and built a rubble ramp which led them onto the Temple Mount.

And that hilltop, according to the historian Josephus, "enveloped in flames from top to bottom, appeared to be boiling up from its very roots; yet the sea of flame was nothing to the ocean of blood, or the companies of killers to the armies of killed."

The ruins of Herod's Jerusalem and the Temple Mount can be seen today in isolated, incomplete patches in the Old City. But behind the Holyland Hotel, first-century Jerusalem still stands in its moment of glory, beauty, political splintering and spiritual ferment, before it all collapsed.

The model of Second-Temple Jerusalem can be approached from Herzl Boulevard in Bayit Vagan, turning southeast on Uziel St. and following it to the end. It can also be reached from Malha, turning north on Sharent St. from Golomb St., and then east on Perez Bernstein St. Take bus 21 or 21A. The model is open daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tel. (02) 643-7777.

Allan Robinowitz is a licensed tour guide. He can be reached at allan@jpost.co.il

Close Encounters

By Allan Robinowitz

On the grounds of the Holyland Hotel just past Jerusalem's Bayit Vagan neighborhood stands a fascinating, popular and superbly constructed model of Second Temple Jerusalem.

This model sweeps away the accumulated layers of 2,000 years of history, to reveal Jerusalem as it appeared when expanded by King Herod and afterward.

This was the period when Jesus preached, roamed and died here; when the city boiled with violent political and religious feuds;

when the seeds of transformation toward rabbinic Judaism were planted, and when the Roman Empire clenched it in its mailed fist and destroyed both Temple and city in the year 70 CE.

The construction of this model was a major accomplishment in itself. The project began before Jerusalem was reunified in 1967, when the area being studied was actually in Jordan, and off limits to Jews. The model was based on old excavation material, the Talmud, the writings of the historian Josephus and the New Testament.

TO OUR READERS

Some of the advertisements appearing in our paper are typeset outside. The Jerusalem Post graphics department. When such advertisements arrive just before the publication deadline, especially when they are given to us in the form of a film or via e-mail, it is difficult for us to correct any spelling mistakes that may appear. While we make every effort to correct such errors, we must ask our readers' indulgence for those occasions when this is not possible.

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Weekender Leisure

Gottex still makes a splash



(Above) The lingerie concept has remained embedded in Gottex designer Judith Gottfried's subconscious; (below) Rose trellis prints create an aura of romance.



Flair

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

In its heyday, the Gottlieb-owned Gottex swim- and beachwear company, which propelled Israel onto the international fashion map, held gala nighttime showings of its new collection at a theater, or in the ballroom of a luxury hotel.

Daytime shows were held in the factory showroom, but even those were extremely glamorous affairs to which exactly the right number of people were invited. There was no crowding around the refreshments or the runway. There was an air of exclusivity, a feeling that one had entered the portals of the rich and the beautiful.

This wasn't quite the case at last week's local launch of the Gottex swim- and beachwear collection for summer '99.

Although the company's relatively new showrooms, with their tropical-garden surroundings in Or Yehuda, have all the clan that one would expect of a Gottex enterprise, the atmosphere was different.

There were so many people crowding the place that it was almost impossible to turn around without literally bumping into someone. The "no smoking" notices were ignored and the food islands were mobbed.

Inside the darkened showroom where a couple of hundred seats had been set out, there was a slight sense of drama which could not have been achieved in broad daylight. Silver and sea-blue lighting set the tone for the collection which was no less lovely or breathtaking than its half century of predecessors.

Yet the past grandeur of Gottex shows was lacking, despite the fact that Gottex founder Leah Gottlieb and her daughter Judith Gottfried were on hand to meet and greet the invitees.

The organization has been out of their hands since Africa Israel's takeover, but they are still strongly involved with the design - Judith Gottfried more so than her mother.

Some 20 years ago, Judith wanted to break away and build up a lingerie company whose products would vie with those of France or Italy. Brief though her fling was, the lingerie concept has remained embedded in her subconscious.

This time around, her muse was obvious in the tops of her two-piece swimsuits. Not only the shape and the underwiring were bra inspired, but also the lace embroidery trims. There were also padded thong bras and skimpy teeny-weeny bikinis.

For women whose cleavage is perhaps no longer smooth enough to bare, there were semi-transparent cropped tank tops which included a bandeau bra section.

The show started with a group of silver water nymphs wearing stark, strapless maillots. Then came the two-piece concoctions, some featuring skirts that looked like half slips.

More interesting was the vertical drawstring tank top which revealed a sliver of midriff over the bikini pants.

The caftan, a Gottex signature item which has been part and parcel of the company's summer and resortwear collections, has been narrowed to a slimmer silhouette. Its position in general has been usurped by romantic double-layered slip dresses in diaphanous light-and-shadow fabrics.

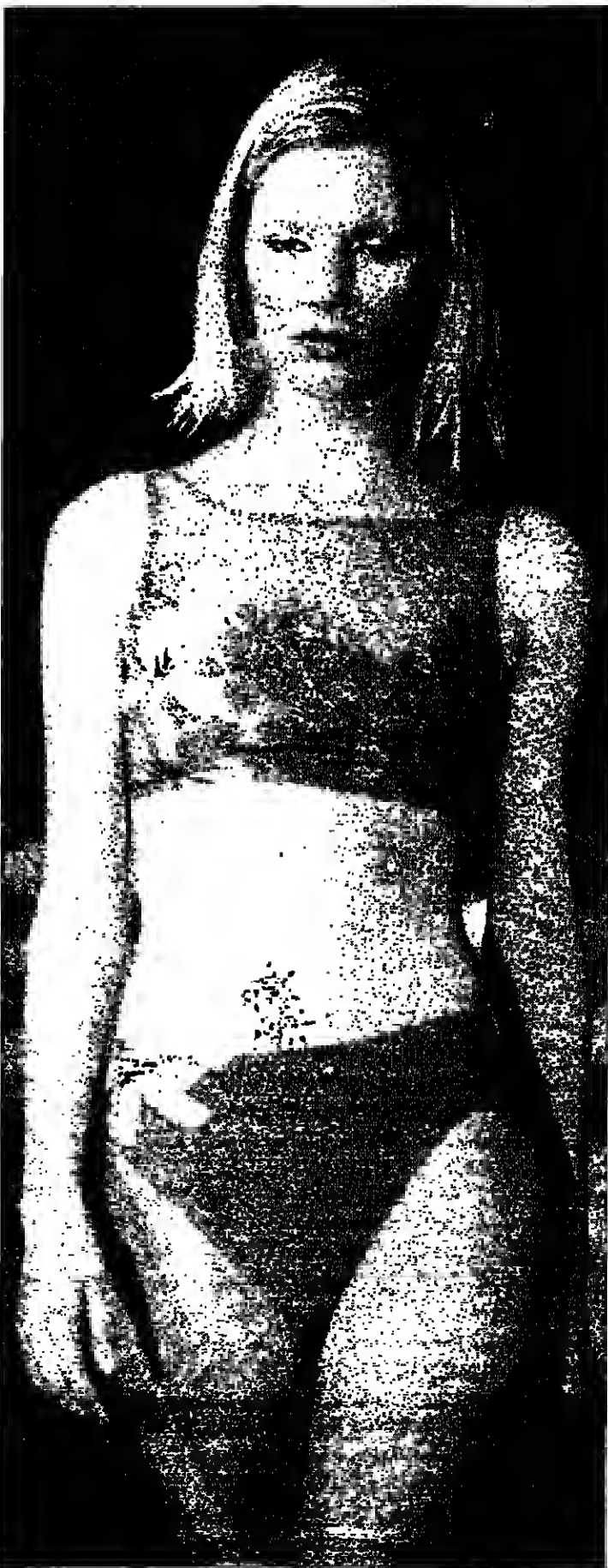
In fact, fabrics play almost as great a role in the collection as design. Glittered Lycra, burn-out transparencies, rose-trellis prints and cut-out rose edgings create an aura of romance enhanced by huge see-through pareos worn as shawls or tied sarong-style around the hips.

Some of the larger floral prints were not my cup of tea, but since they are Gottex perennials, they obviously have a following.

Gold has always been part of the grand finale of a Gottex show, and the tradition was preserved, though with less fanfare than in the past. This year it was something that could be described as a tribute to Tutankhamen. In addition to the metallic updates of the fashions of ancient Egypt, the group also includes a series of Pharaonic prints.



(Above) Some of the two-piece concoctions featured skirts that looked like half-slips; (below) Fabrics play almost as great a role in the collection as design, as seen in this floral transparency.



Bridge Newsletters by e-mail

By MATTHEW GRANOVETTER

North dealer
East-West vulnerable

North
♠ A Q 8
♥ K Q 2
♦ K Q 10 2
♣ 10 5 3

West East
♠ 3 ♠ K J 9 2
♥ 10 8 7 5 ♥ J 3
♦ 8 6 4 ♦ 9 7
♣ Q J 9 4 2 ♣ A K 8 7 6

South
♠ 10 7 6 5 4
♥ A 9 6 4
♦ A J 5 3
♣

West North East South
1 NT pass 2 ♠
pass 2 ♠ pass 2 ♠
pass 3 ♠ pass 4 ♠
(all pass)

Opening lead: ♠ Q

The latest idea in creating publicity for bridge magazines is to offer computer users free newsletters. Two of the most well-known newsletters are the *Bridge World Magazine* newsletter, offered at BridgeWorld.com and *Bridge Today University and Magazine* newsletter, which is offered at my Web site [BridgeToday.com]. After logging on the Web sites, you click your mouse on "free newsletter" and then type your e-mail address. These newsletters contain bridge tips, ads, and news updates on assorted bridge-related topics.

In addition to newsletters, the two Web sites offer lots of other interesting ideas, contests and bidding panels. *BridgeToday.com* offers samples from its e-mail bridge courses, and a bidding panel forum conducted by Alvin Roth of Boca Raton, Florida. Roth, one of the game's all-time greats (he invented negative doubles, the forcing notrump and many other modern conventions), is quite opinionated, and readers who respond to his bidding panel must be prepared to accept some strong chastisement at times.

The answers to his bidding problems are sent free to the people who participate. Recently I received a letter from Roth in which today's deal was discussed. It came up in one of his weekly home games in Florida and all the players were experts. Nevertheless, as Roth relates, "the South player went down in a cold contract, simply because he took his eye off the ball."

The bidding began with a one-notrump opening by North and a pass by East.

As you can see, he might have made an overcall, but decided the vulnerability made any call too risky. South used the Stayman convention and North responded two diamonds, showing no four-card major. South now bid two spades, forcing partner to bid again. North raised spades and South went on to game. North-South were using "forcing Stayman." If they had been playing "non-forcing Stayman," South would have had to jump to three spades at his second call.

West led the queen of clubs and South ruffed it. The contract appeared to be safe. Indeed, on a good day, with the king of spades in the West hand and spades dividing 3-2, declarer would have made 12 tricks. So declarer relaxed and stopped thinking. He led a spade to the queen and East won the king and returned another club. South ruffed this and, with two trumps in each hand, led a trump to the ace. But when West showed out, the contract was suddenly in jeopardy.

Declarer ruffed a third club and desperately tried to cash red-suit winners. The best he could do was cash two hearts and two diamonds before East ruffed in, drew the last trump and claimed the rest of the tricks with high clubs. The contract was down two.

Declarer's mistake was leading the second round of trumps to the ace. He should have played his red-suit winners before touching spades a second time. East will ruff in and play a third round of clubs, but South can ruff, lead a spade to the ace and continue his red suits, losing only three trump tricks.

Matthew Granovetter can be reached by e-mail at Mat@bridgetoday.com

Chess will return next week



A tribute to Tutankhamen

MARK

MARK

Gov't seeks budget

Gov't seeks budget

Feud betw

Feud betw

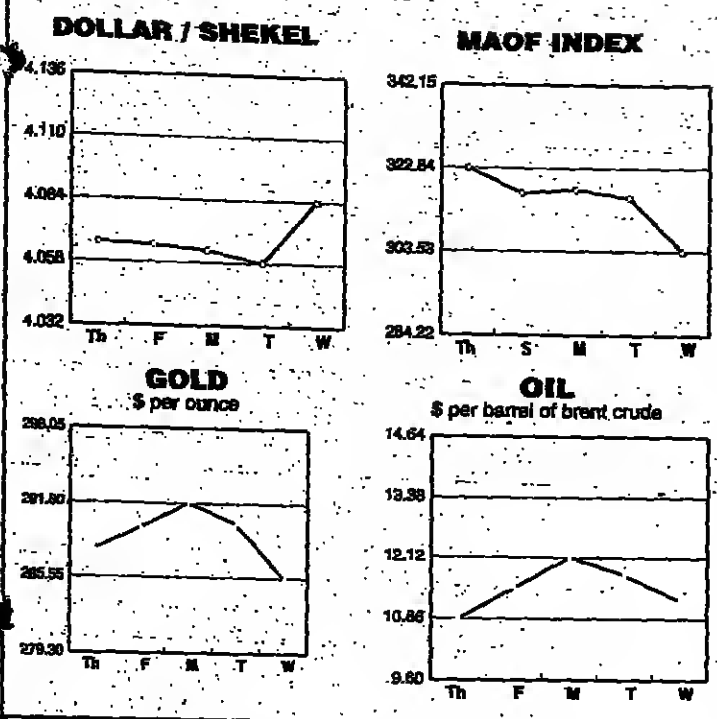
Only

هكذا من الأصل

Thursday,
January 14, 1999

MARKETS

in brief



Gov't seeks to pass '99 budget next week

By JESSICA STEINBERG

The government plans to pass the 1999 state budget by next Wednesday or Thursday, coalition MKs said yesterday.

The highly contentious budgetary arrangements bill - now two weeks overdue - will pass through the Finance Committee on Sunday, according to committee chairman Abraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism).

Treasury budget director David Milgrom, Prime Minister's Office Director-General Moshe Leu, and several coalition MKs on the Finance Committee hammered out a series of changes to the 47-clause bill on Tuesday. Still under discussion are clauses concerning public housing, municipal taxes, minimum-wage updates, and health funds.

Some 20 budget austerity measures will either be postponed, frozen, or canceled, while the rest should pass the Finance Committee on Sunday, according to Treasury spokesman Eli Yosef.

Meanwhile, Labor's Effi Ohshaya said his party informed the Likud that it's ready to support the budget and the accompanying bill, but that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is playing election economics.

However, Ophir Pines (Labor) said Labor would vote against the budget, because "supporting it would only serve the coalition's needs. We don't have any reason to vote for it," he said.

As for the arrangements bill, Labor MKs will support some and oppose others, according to Pines.

Coalition whip Meir Sheerit said he's asked both coalition and opposition MKs to pass the budget.

"If the budget isn't passed, each citizen will pay dearly," said Sheerit to a group of reporters, after announcing that he wouldn't be replacing Netanyahu as finance minister.

While warning against the government's planned election economics schemes, Sheerit added that the elections could influence what is accepted or postponed in the budget, thus generating a tricky balancing act.

"This budget was built two years ago, when drastic cuts were made in order to foster growth," he said. "So when the government fell, you couldn't just pretend that nothing happened."

For now, the controversial Public Housing Law is the only measure holding up the budget bill's passage, said Ravitz.

The NIS 10 billion law, passed by the opposition last October, would allow 100,000 public housing residents to purchase their homes at discounted prices.

"It's a populist law that will cost the country billions of shekels," said Ravitz, "and the government already has an alternative plan that's successful and costs less."

According to Ran Cohen (Meretz), the law's author, Milgrom is actively seeking to kill it. "I asked Milgrom if he represents the government," said Cohen, adding that he will take the law to the Supreme Court if it gets frozen in the Finance Committee.

Brazil central banker resigns as gov't dilutes currency defenses

By ALEXANDRE SPATUZZA

BRASILIA (Bloomberg) - Brazil dropped the hard-line defense of its currency in a bid to revive the slumping economy, allowing the real to plummet 9 percent, and sending world markets tumbling.

The country let its currency weaken as the cost of propping up the real for more than a year - interest rates of up to 50% and a looming recession - became too painful.

World markets slid because of concerns that the move by the world's ninth-biggest economy - two months after a \$41.5 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund - could spark a global collapse, such as the one unleashed by Russia's devaluation last August. European banks with exposure to Latin America, such as Spain's Banco Santander SA, fell up to 10%.

"The No. 1 concern in 1999 is Brazil," said Oliver Lefevre, of Moote Paschi Banque in Paris. "Banks will be hit because people are worried about their debt exposure."

In weakening the real, the government eliminated a daily trading band and widened its target for devaluation this year. As a result, it sees the currency sliding as much as 15% this year, compared to the previous target of 7%.

The bank also made its annual shift in the band in which the real trades, expanding the spread between the top and bottom of 10% from 8.9%.

Within hours, the real breached the band's floor of 1.32 - plunging as much as 9% to 1.3285, more than 1998's entire decline.

The rate on one-day certificates of deposit for March delivery, the most actively traded interest rate futures contract on Sao Paulo's BM&F commodities and futures exchange, jumped more than 10 percentage points to 49.05 from 38.89% yesterday.

To clear the way for the overhaul of the foreign exchange regime, the central bank president, Gustavo Franco, quit.



Traders work the floor of the Bovespa (Sao Paulo Stock Exchange) earlier this week. Traders believe Brazil's economic woes will cast a shadow on the global financial scene this year. Inset: The central bank governor Gustavo Franco resigned (AP)

"It has become a natural belief that the two issues - my resignation and more flexible policies of interest rates and foreign exchange - should be considered as one," said Franco, who was replaced by one of his deputies, Francisco Lopes, director of monetary policy at the bank.

The moves came as foreign reserves erode and popular anger at high borrowing costs mounts. They were triggered by mounting concern the government won't be able to close its projected \$64b. budget deficit enough to cut interest rates and revive an economy projected to shrink up to 4% this year.

While Russia's devaluation, led to a debt default, some say Brazil's link to the US economy will prompt stepped-up efforts to shore it up.

"I don't think the IMF and the US will cut Brazil off," said Jose Cerritelli, an analyst at Gramercy Advisers LLC, a New York-based money manager specializing in emerging markets. "They are going to have to help Brazil through it" and probably help pull together an agreement with the country's creditors to reorganize Brazil's debt.

In a measure of eroding confidence in Brazil, \$1.2b. left the country even though interest rates soared. Brazil's reserves have shrunk to about \$35b. from more than \$70b. last year. An IMF credit line could provide \$32.5b. more.

Brazil's benchmark "C" bond -

the most widely traded emerging market security - plunged 9%, driving its yield to 20%, higher than during the worst of Russia's debt crisis last August.

Stocks in the US and Europe tumbled, led by banks such as BankBoston Corp., which have an estimated \$75b. in credit at risk in Latin America.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 193.09 to 9282.62 as all but one of the 30 members fell. The Standard & Poor's 500 Index slid 23.92 to 1215.87, sending it into negative territory for the year. Twelve times as many stocks fell as rose on the New York Stock Exchange.

Companies with extensive investments in Brazil led markets' declines. Spain's Telefonica SA, one of the biggest foreign investors in Brazil, dropped 8.9%.

Brazil is the US's biggest South American trading partner and the region's largest economy. A weaker Brazilian currency and higher interest rates will crimp demand for US goods and jeopardize investments there.

Citigroup Inc. sank 5 3/4 to 50 1/2. J.P. Morgan & Co. fell 3 13/16 to 108. BankBoston, which gets about one-fifth of its profits from Latin America, fell 2 11/16.

"Brazil is another point of light that suggests we should be worried about corporate profits in 1999," said Dean Eberling, an analyst at Putnam, Lovell, de Guandoli & Thornton.

Arison invests \$57m. more in Eurocom

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Arison Investments exercised an option to acquire an additional 19 percent stake in Eurocom communications, the company announced yesterday.

The stake was purchased from Eurocom's president and CEO Shaul Elovitch for an estimated \$57 million.

Arison Investments - which is the Israeli investment arm of businessman Ted Arison, the founder of the Miami-based cruise ship operator Carnival Corp. - holds

some 47% of the Ramat Gan based company following the deal.

The option to increase its stake was given to Arison in 1997, when the company acquired 28% of Eurocom for an estimated \$20m.-\$30m.

Arison said Eurocom will be used as a platform for investments in the communications market, which is considered as one of the most promising sectors in the local market.

Eurocom distributes a host of communications products and provides a variety of services.

Since the Arison group entered the company it has turned it from a supplier of end-user systems to a company involved in almost any major project in the local communications market.

Among others, the company has a stake in Partner Communications, which won a tender to become the country's third supplier of cellular phone services and holds 11% of the Bezeq-Ispargroup - which is bidding to offer digital broadcast satellite (DBS) services.

In addition, Eurocom holds a

stake in Internet Gold, one of Israel's largest Internet suppliers, and in the regional radio station Radios. The company had an estimated turnover of some \$300m. last year.

Arison Investments, which was established in 1993 focuses on four sectors - real estate and construction, banking, communications and high-tech.

So far, the company has invested some \$1 billion in Israeli companies.

Its major investment included leading an investors group which won a tender in 1997 to purchase 43% of Bank Hapoalim, the country's largest bank, for NIS 4.8b.

Arison also owns 21.9% of Housing and Construction Holding Co., the parent company of Solel Boneh, which is the country's largest construction company.

The company has also invested in about 40 local start-ups and participates in an investment company for the biotechnology, medical devices and pharmaceutical sectors.

Feud between Agis and Clalit health fund cools as medicine supply resumes

By NICKY BLACKBURN

Drug manufacturer Agis has resumed its drug supplies to Kupat Holim Clalit, in what seems like a tentative move towards solving the bitter pricing feud which broke out between the Bnei Brak based pharmaceutical company and Israel's largest health care organization.

In the meantime, however, Agis general manager Moshe Arkin has written to Health Minister Yehoshua Maza asking him to set up a committee to discover who is responsible for the suffering some patients experienced as a result of

the widely-publicized battle.

The dispute between Agis and Clalit broke out at the end of last year when Agis, which sold about NIS 100 million worth of drugs to Clalit during the first nine months of 1998, raised its prices as a result of the devaluation of the shekel.

Clalit refused to pay the new prices and claims that from January 3, Agis stopped providing it with the necessary drugs.

Arkin, however, insists that his company twice offered Clalit the chance to enter into mediation and both offers were rejected.

On Tuesday, Clalit announced it

had signed four agreements to import medications from abroad at substantially lower prices than those charged by Agis. On the same day, Agis agreed to start supplying Clalit with drugs once more, though price levels have not yet been fixed.

"I hope very much that negotiations with Clalit will start soon and that we can come up with a reasonable solution," said Arkin. "There are some initial contacts which I hope will be realized at the beginning of next week."

A spokesman for Clalit said that the renewed supply of drugs

showed some progress but added: "We still don't understand if it's going to be for a long period or if it's a small shipment. We are still checking the situation."

According to Arkin, during the last week a number of patients, particularly cancer patients, have been put at risk because they did not receive essential medications in time. Patients have also been switched to different drugs.

"There must be someone at the Ministry of Health who will take responsibility for this situation," said Arkin. "Patients have been put unnecessarily at risk and it is the

ministry's responsibility to find an active solution rather than just passively waiting to see what happens. They cannot run away from this, as they are doing right now. Such problems are also their business and they should stop viewing this as a commercial dispute."

In Arkin's letter to Maza, he demanded that a special investigative committee be set up to examine who is responsible for the problems patients have experienced.

He said it was also essential that the government set up a structure of control that would stop such a crisis from occurring again.

Arkin, who threatened to take the case to the High Court if the ministry ignores his plea, said he believes that allowing parallel imports will not solve any problems. "We have to find a fair price between the supplier and the client," he said.

Judy Siegel adds: "Introducing parallel import of pharmaceuticals will reduce by 'at least 20%' the country's NIS 2 billion expenditures on drugs, the Treasury said yesterday."

The Finance Ministry, explaining its backing of the government's efforts to break the monopolies of

drug importers, said the change would benefit not only the health funds and hospitals, but also consumers buying medications in private pharmacies.

The current situation, which would be changed if a section of the Arrangements Bill dealing with the issue is passed, gives much power to an elite group of importers. "They are interested in preserving by any means their high profits and put pressure on members of the Knesset Finance Committee - while making unverified and untrue claims," the statement said.

Online ticketing challenges travel agents

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Internet is helping airlines trim costs and helping consumers find bargains, but for travel agents, online ticket sales pose a serious challenge that is forcing them to find new ways of doing business.

Jupiter Communications, a New York-based digital commerce research firm, projected Internet sales would become a larger and larger proportion of the airline market, with online sales forecast to increase from 2.5 percent of transactions in 1998 to 8.4% in 2002.

We expect online sales to grow exponentially, said Laurie Salvano, marketing manager for the Web site of UAL Corp.'s United Airlines, which offers bookings on 500 other carriers and also serves 30,000 hotels and 45 car rental agencies.

Salvano said that business through United's site currently account for \$16 million in ticket sales a month, or 1.5% of United's total revenues.

Airlines are also giving incen-

tives to consumers who book directly through the airlines own sites, thereby circumventing costly travel agent commission fees.

United, for instance, is currently offering online buyers 1,000 bonus miles plus entry into a sweepstakes, Salvano said.

She added that online booking is the airline's cheapest distribution channel.

According to Jupiter, online transactions will save air and hotel suppliers \$689m. over the next five years.

This change in the airline market is not going over so well with travel agents. And responding in part to how the airlines are using the Internet, the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) recently filed a suit with the Department of Justice, charging the airlines with engaging in anti-competitive acts.

Among other things, ASTA said that airlines are discriminating against travel agents on the Web by imposing commission caps which pay agencies a rate well below

their cost of selling air travel.

Airlines pay agencies lower commissions for tickets sold online than for tickets sold via traditional channels, and this makes agencies less competitive on the web, said Steve Loucks, an ASTA spokesperson.

However, Joseph Daniel, professor of economics at the University of Delaware, said that what the airlines are doing with the Internet is advantageous to consumers, adding that travel agents do not guarantee competition and the Internet aids in price discovery.

He said that airlines and consumers will benefit from lower distribution costs associated with Internet sales. But he added that a big shakeout in travel agencies will result, including consolidation.

Daniel said that room for travel agents still exists to holiday packaging and more complex transactions, in which agents can leverage their knowledge and experience.

Travel agents on the Web need to niche, said Sally Lewis, marketing manager of Travel.com - a website that sells airline tickets and acts as a portal to other travel sites.

She related an example of a small storefront agency that was prepared to close, until the agency decided to take advantage of its expertise in Caribbean spa travel to the Internet developing a market niche that turned it into an \$8m. a year business.

Meanwhile, Aaron Gellman, director of the Transportation Center at Northwestern University, believes the Internet has positive effects beyond simply reducing distribution costs.

Gellman said that airlines can improve their efficiency in a number of ways, including reducing the industry's \$3 billion parts

inventory and hedging risk through a type of futures market for seats.

A transaction along these lines was completed last year, when financial services and travel company American Express Co. made a bulk purchase of airline seats from Cointinental Airlines Inc., which allowed AmEx to resell the seats at discount prices, said Melissa Abernathy, a spokesperson for American Express.

American Express did not assume full risk for the seats, and the deal enabled the company to dictate its own margins rather than relying on commissions, Abernathy added.

Still, airlines need to be wary of the Internet as well, warns Warren Bonham, an airline consultant with Ballo and Co.

Bonham said that price-sensitive consumers who once bought tickets weeks in advance to secure the best deals are instead hopping on the Internet to get cheap last-minute fares, exposing airlines to greater risk.

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KEY MARKETS

(Currency deposit rates)

CURRENCY	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
US DOLLARS	4.800	5.090
STERLING	5.540	5.620
FRANCS	2.180	2.760
MARKS	0.190	0.500

(All indicated according to deposit)

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CURRENCY	BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	
US DOLLARS	—	—	4.4787
STERLING	3.97	4.17	0.0840
FRANCS	—	—	4.7813
MARKS	2.38	2.50	2.4447
ITALYAN LIRA	6.55	6.39	7.6727
SPANISH PESA	0.71	0.75	0.7288
PORTUGAL ESC	3.57	3.75	3.6445
RUSSIAN RUB	2.11	2.22	2.1697
YEN	2.91	3.06	2.9877
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SPORTS

in brief

Cardiff end FA Cup run of giant-killers Yeovil

LONDON (Reuters) - Minor league club Yeovil, one of the great giant-killers of the English FA Cup, went out of the competition on Tuesday night after a dramatic 2-1 defeat by Cardiff City in a third-round replay.

The Somerset side, who in their history have produced 18 victories over Football League opponents, hit an 86th minute equalizer from Matt Hayfield to force the game into extra time after Jeff Eckhardt had given Cardiff the lead in the 43rd minute.

But a defensive error in the first minute of extra time let Kevin Nugent in for Cardiff's winner.

The two teams had drawn 1-1 in the first clash earlier this month at Cardiff.

In the fourth round, Cardiff travel to the winner of a third-round replay between first division Sheffield United and second division Notts County which was postponed because of poor weather on Tuesday.

Marathon man Jim Peters dies

LONDON (Reuters) - Jim Peters, the English marathon runner who captured the imagination of the sporting public when he staggered round the final lap at the 1954 Empire Games in Vancouver, Canada, has died aged 80.

Peters led the field by around five kms as he came into the stadium but in the blazing heat he fell six times as he staggered and then crawled agonisingly towards the tape.

He was eventually overtaken by the rest of the runners and never crossed the finishing line after finally being helped away when it was clear he could not continue.

Peters retired from athletics after the Games, forerunner of the Commonwealth Games, but the image of his heroic efforts still lives on.

An obituary in yesterday's Times described the episode as "one of the most dramatic and poignant failures of modern athletics."

India confirms swap of Test venues

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - Indian cricket authorities said yesterday they had decided to switch the venues of the first two Test matches during Pakistan's upcoming tour, hit by threats of disruption by Hindu rightwing activists.

They decided late on Tuesday that, as earlier media reports had said on Monday, the venues of the Delhi and Madras Tests of the two-Test series would be swapped.

The first Test will now take place in Madras from January 28 and the second in Delhi from February 4.

Cricketers said the change of venues was done to ensure adequate security in Delhi, as the original dates for the first Test clashed with a busy period in the Indian capital.

Akram signs for Birmingham club Smethwick

LONDON (Reuters) - Pakistan captain Wasim Akram has signed for Birmingham league club Smethwick in order to extend his Test career.

Akram, who is one of several players under investigation by a judicial commission over match-fixing and bribery charges, will lead his country against India this month.

The 32-year-old all-rounder was released by his county Lancashire last year after 11 years at Old Trafford.

"I want to play for Pakistan for as long as I can and joining Smethwick means I will not suffer the wear and tear of county cricket," Akram said.

Spanish club Valladolid punished

MADRID (AP) - One too many foreigners - even for just five minutes - proved a costly mistake for Spanish first division side Valladolid this week.

In an unprecedented move late Tuesday, the Spanish Soccer Federation penalized struggling Valladolid for playing one more than the regulatory four foreign players during last Sunday's game against Betis, which Valladolid won 2-1.

The federation ordered that the three victory points be taken away from Valladolid and given to Betis and the result recorded as a 3-0 defeat. It also banned Valladolid coach, Croat Sergio Kresic, for two months and fined the club \$3,500.

Former Blues player Wickenheiser dies at 37

ST. LOUIS (AP) - Doug Wickenheiser, whose dramatic overtime playoff goal in 1986 is fondly remembered by St. Louis Blues fans as the Monday Night Miracle, died Tuesday of lung cancer. He was 37.

Wickenheiser, who was with the Blues for all or parts of four seasons from 1983-1987, had 51 goals and 67 assists in 230 games with St. Louis, and the team used the ex-center's jersey No. 14, as inspiration for his battle with the disease.

Wickenheiser, picked with the top overall pick by the Montreal Canadiens in the 1980 NHL draft, totaled 111 goals and 156 assists in 556 games in a 10-season career that also had stops at Montreal, Vancouver, the New York Rangers and Washington from 1980-90.

SA cricketer to be charged with rape

EAST LONDON, South Africa (AP) - A player for the national cricket team will be charged with rape, a top prosecutor announced yesterday.

In a statement, Eastern Cape attorney general Les Roberts did not name the player, but said the man would appear in court in East London "within the next few days." The charges reportedly will be in connection with an assault on a 21-year-old student at a cricket ground in East London last year.

"Because of provisions in the criminal procedure act restricting the publication of details relating to rape charges, I have refrained from furnishing further information," Roberts said.

Gilchrist steers Aussies to victory

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Adam Gilchrist smashed a magnificent century yesterday to lead Australia to a remarkable eight-wicket win over Sri Lanka in a tri-series limited-overs match at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Gilchrist blasted 131 in 118 balls as Australia overhauled Sri Lanka's imposing total of 259 for nine with eight wickets in hand and 3.5 overs to spare.

Gilchrist hit 10 boundaries and two sixes during his innings to propel Australia to 260 for two in 46.1 overs and give them their first win of the competition after they were beaten by England in Brisbane on Sunday.

Sri Lanka, who will defend their one-day World Cup title later this year, have lost both their games so far. Gilchrist's 131 was the fourth highest score by an Australian in a limited-overs international behind Ricky Ponting (145), Dean Jones (145) and Greg Chappell (138) not out.

The world champions looked to be in with a good chance against Australia after posting a challenging total of 259 for nine from their 50 overs.

Sanath Jayasuriya (65) and Hashan Tillekeratne (73) both hit half-centuries as the Sri Lankans attacked from the outset after winning the toss and deciding to bat.

Jayasuriya, in particular, was in determined mood, smashing the Australian attack from the start of the innings.

He gambled on several occasions, chipping over the heads of the inner ring of fieldsmen and deliberately edging the ball wide of the slips cord, but was always in control.

Scoring at better than a run a ball, Jayasuriya went on to make 65 - his first half-century in 19 limited-overs matches against Australia - before he was caught behind in the 15th over with the total on 15.

With Jayasuriya gone, Sri Lanka's run-rate slowed considerably as the Australians tried to restrict them to a manageable target.

Romesh Kaluwitharana, who opened the batting with Jayasuriya,



AUSSIE MATCHWINNER - Adam Gilchrist acknowledges the crowd's appreciation after scoring a quickfire century against Sri Lanka yesterday.

pushed his score along to 32 before he was bowled around his legs by Australian wrist spinner Shane Warne.

Marvan Atapattu (18), Arjuna Ranatunga (26) and Mahela Jayawardene (11) all made starts but

did not go on with it even though Australia suffered a major setback when their second-string spinner Brad Young injured himself sliding into the fence and was unable to either bat or bowl during the match.

The exception was veteran left-

hander Tillekeratne, who top scored with 73 before he was run out in the last over of the innings.

But Tillekeratne was lucky to survive when he bottom-edged a catch to Gilchrist before he was off the mark.

He was given the benefit of the doubt by the umpires although television replays clearly showed that he had nicked the ball.

Chasing 260 for victory - three runs more than any team had made to win an international one-day match at the SCG batting second - Australia wasted little time in putting their target of 5.2 runs per over.

With Gilchrist dominating the early stages of the innings, Australia reached their 50 off just 8.4 overs.

Gilchrist brought up his own half-century off just 37 balls, which featured a massive six off Muttiah Muralitharan, while Mark Waugh made 63 off 76 deliveries in an opening stand of 151.

Gilchrist, who was dropped by Jayawardene at deep mid-wicket on 68, went on to post his fourth one-day century from 98 balls when he smashed Jayawardene over the square leg fence for six.

He departed for 131 when he hit paceman Chaminda Vaas straight to Atapattu before Ponting (43 not out) and Damien Martyn (16 not out) steered Australia to victory.

SRI LANKA	
S. Jayasuriya c Gilchrist b Julian	65
R. Kaluwitharana b Vaas	26
M. Atapattu c M. Waugh b Warne	18
H. Tillekeratne not out	73
A. Ranatunga run out	26
M. Jayawardene c Gilchrist b Julian	11
U. Chandana b Fleming	2
R. Muralitharan c Gilchrist b M. Waugh	2
C. Vaas not out	13
M. Muralitharan run out	1
Extras (b 2 b 2 w 0 nb 5)	10
Total (for nine, 50 overs)	259
Fall of wickets: 1-15 (8.4), 2-32 (16.1), 3-130 (4.23), 4-259 (24.6), 5-259 (24.6)	
Did not bat: P. Wickramasinghe	
Bowling: M. Waugh 10-0-28-1 (fb-2 w-1), Fleming 10-0-41-1 (fb-1 w-1), Elliott 2-0-23-0, Julian 6-0-42-2 (fb-1 w-2), Warne 10-1-44-2 (fb-1), Bawa 5-0-26-0 (w-1), Martyn 5-0-30-0	

AUSTRALIA	
M. Waugh c sub b Muralitharan	53
A. Gilchrist c Atapattu b Vaas	131
R. Ponting not out	43
D. Martyn not out	16
Extras (b-3 w-4)	7
Total (for two, 46.1 overs)	260
Fall of wickets: 1-15 (8.4), 2-130 (4.23), 3-130 (4.23), 4-259 (24.6), 5-259 (24.6)	
Did not bat: G. Chappell, M. Deon, B. Julian, P. Warne, D. Fleming, O. Smith, B. Young	
Bowling: S. Jayasuriya 10-0-28-1 (fb-2 w-1), Wickramasinghe 7-1-36-0 (w-1), Muralitharan 10-0-41-1, Jayawardene 7-0-40-0, Chandana 2-0-23-0 (fb-1), Atapattu 7-1-0-26-0 (w-1)	
Result: Australia won by eight wickets.	
Man of the match: Adam Gilchrist (Australia)	

STANDINGS			
	P	W	Pts
England	2	2	0
Australia	2	1	0
Sri Lanka	2	0	0

Agassi crushes Korda in Melbourne warm-up

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Troubled Czech Petr Korda stumbled badly in his preparation for his Australian Open title defence yesterday when he was thrashed by former world No. 1 Andre Agassi.

Korda, at the center of a growing controversy over a positive steroid test, fell to Agassi 6-2 6-1 in just 55 minutes in the opening match of the Colonial Classic exhibition tournament in the Melbourne suburb of Kooyong.

It was the spindly Czech's second first-round defeat in eight days. He was beaten by unheralded Moroccan Karim Alami in Qatar last week.

Despite a sluggish performance

against a sharp Agassi and the lingering cloud over his drugs case, Korda said he expected to be near his best when the Australian Open begins on Monday.

"I want to defend my Australian Open title the best I can, Korda told reporters. "That's why I'm working hard, which is probably why I'm a little bit stiff at the moment."

In a trying week for Korda, the ITP is to lodge an appeal against its own appeals committee's decision with the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport this week.

A mandatory ATP players council meeting will also discuss the case in Melbourne on Saturday. In the second match at Kooyong,

Sweden's Thomas Enqvist produced a solid performance to down erratic Croat Goran Ivanisevic 7-6 7-6. Korda will meet Ivanisevic in the second day of the round robin stage today.

Defending champion Mark Philippoussis of Australia later downed a tired Tim Henman of Britain 2-6 6-4 6-4.

Henman only arrived overnight from Doha, where the world No. 7 lost the final of the Qatar Open to unseeded German Rainer Schuttler.

He meets Yevgeny Kafelnikov today. The Russian was beaten 6-7 6-3 7-5 by former French Open champion Michael Chang in the final match of the day.

Graf beats Serena to earn clash with Venus

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Former world No. 1 Steffi Graf survived a fightback by Serena Williams to earn a meeting with the other half of the family at the Sydney International tournament yesterday.

Graf, tuning her game for the Australian Open next week, won the second-round match 6-2 3-6 7-5 and next faces Venus Williams in the quarter-finals today.

Graf, 29, is making her first appearance at the Sydney tournament since 1984. She pulled out of an exhibition in Hong Kong last week with a virus but said she had now recovered.

Joining the German sixth seed as second round winners were top seed and world No. 1 Lindsay Davenport, third seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and seventh seed Patty Schnyder.

Men's top seed Alex Corretja of Spain, fourth seeded Slovak Karol Kucera and seventh seed Albert Costa of Spain also advanced.

But Russian Anna Kournikova was not so lucky, beaten 6-1 6-2 by Belgian Dominique Van Roost, the eighth seed, after serving 16 double faults, including four in a row to lose the fifth game of the match to trail 4-1.

Kournikova, 17, also served 21 double faults in her first round match but still managed to beat Italy's Sylvia Farina, giving her a total of 37 for the tournament.

Report: Palace to sack Venables

LONDON (Reuters) - Crystal Palace manager Terry Venables is to be sacked after just five months in charge, the Daily Mirror reported yesterday.

The newspaper said the former England manager had been offered a position as consultant with the English first division club by owner Mark Goldberg but had not decided whether or not to accept the position.

It said Venables had grown increasingly frustrated by financial restraints imposed on him in the transfer market and the final straw was a plan to sell striker Matt Jansen.

Venables, one of Britain's most experienced coaches, has bought 13 players and has a squad of 40 players at the London club.

Richards ready to help ailing West Indies

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua (Reuters) - Sir Vivian Richards is ready to help the beleaguered West Indies team who are trailing 4-0 in their five-Test series in South Africa.

Richards, who retired from Test cricket in 1991 after never losing a series as captain, said on Tuesday: "If I can help in whatever department, I will be quite willing to do so. Being ready could mean now."

Richards said he would like to work with the present management and coaching team because of his respect for those in charge.

Former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd is manager and for-

mer Test fast bowler Malcolm Marshall is coach of the squad in South Africa.

"I've a lot of respect for Clive and I wouldn't want to overstep my bounds in any particular way because there are so many people I have respect for - people who I think have helped West Indies cricket for a long time and took it to certain heights," Richards said.

"So I will be waiting to see if ever I'm offered whatever (role). I will be quite willing to play a part." When West Indies return from the tour of South Africa, they face a four-Test series against Australia in the Caribbean in March and April.

J'lem escapes Antwerp with three-point deficit

By ELI GRONER

Hapoel Jerusalem will have to overcome a three-point deficit in the second leg of its Saporta Cup home-and-home series after losing to Telindus Antwerp, 67-64, in Belgium last night.

The rematch will be played in Jerusalem on Wednesday, with the aggregate winner advancing to the Round of 16, and a probable matchup with Badalona (Spain).

The game was tight throughout with neither team able to find its rhythm. After the two clubs switched leads nine times in the first half, the Belgians managed to control the pace in the second stanza,

stretching their lead at one point to nine, 56-47.

At that point, Doron Shefa buried a tray and two free throws to spark a Jerusalem rim. Radisav Curcic and Kenny Williams managed to close the gap to one, 65-64, with just two minutes remaining, but a couple of ill-advised three-point attempts left Jerusalem with a three-point deficit heading into the second leg.

Iva Duflo (22 points) and Michael Yuger (18) provided most of the Belgian offense as the two atoned for an off-night from Lou Roe, Curcic and Williams paced Jerusalem with 18 and 16, respectively.

Jets prepare for AFC title showdown with Broncos

Keyshawn comes of age

Coaching doesn't get easier for Parcells

HEMPSTEAD (AP) - The Jets Keyshawn Johnson put on a remarkable performance for the ages in Sunday's 34-24 victory over Jacksonville, catching nine passes for 121 yards and a touchdown, running twice on end-arounds for 28 yards, including a 10-yard score, recovering a fumbled lateral by Jaguars safety Chris Hudson that thwarted any first-half momentum; blocking like a fiend, including laying out defensive end Joel Smeenge on one of Curtis Martin's touchdown runs; and intercepting Mark Brunell's desperation pass at the end of the Jets' seventh straight win.

Not since Jack Mander did it for the 1937 Bears against Washington in the NFL title game has a player had TDs rushing and receiving, recovered a fumble and intercepted a pass.

"It was nothing innovative," coach Bill Parcells said of the interception.

"He is the tallest guy who can jump, just like a 7-footer you put underneath (in basketball), not at the top of the key."

While Johnson was thrilled with his role on defense, he was far more interested in discussing the fumble recovery.

When Curtis Martin lost the ball at the Jaguars 18, Hudson scooped it up and headed the other way. He was about to be hit by quarterback Vinny Testaverde at the New York 40 when Hudson decided to lateral. The ball bounced on the turf and was recovered by ... Johnson.

"One thing I'm going to do is run," said Johnson, a Pro Bowl receiver in his third NFL season after being the top overall pick in the 1996 draft. "I'm going to make damn sure I catch him somewhere down the line. If you don't hustle, they have the ball and the game is a whole other situation."

"I don't think I'm slow, so I took off after him. If they don't catch him, I'll make sure I will. When he went to lateral, someone baited it and I was right there. That comes from hustling."

Anyone who has seen Johnson play would have no qualms about his hustle. "He enjoys that kind of competition," Parcells said. "He's very tough mentally and physically. I really take my hat off to him. He is a well-developed player. What I like about him is he is ready for the next thing on his plate."

Johnson hopes that means getting even more action in Denver on Sunday. "I try and play big in every game, no matter what it's for or where it is," he said. "You have to make every game important to you. I don't have to demand the ball with these coaches. They know and recognize talent and how to exploit defenses."

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. (AP) - These should be the best of times for Bill Parcells. He should be riding an emotional tidal wave straight out to Denver for Sunday's AFC Championship game.

Instead, Parcells looks tired, at times even weary of the grind that can eat up football coaches. During a recent news conference, as he reflected on the Jets' 34-24 victory over Jacksonville that moved this usually beleaguered franchise within one win of its first Super Bowl in 30 years, Parcells eyes sometimes seemed glassy. He hadn't slept much - he rarely does during a season, and especially in the playoffs - and he wasn't his normal, bombastic self. In fact, Parcells seemed almost subdued at times.

Is this how a man within sight of his fourth Super Bowl appearance and an unprecedented third with a different franchise (Giants, Patriots and Jets) is expected to act?

"For me, it is on to the next thing, and that is what is said," Parcells said, reflecting on the stressful, insanely competitive nature of his job. "Success is never final. Never. There is always more to do. It is hard to get to where you are now."

You've got to reteach your team every week. Because it's a new environment every week."

To emphasize the inability to truly enjoy the process of competing for a championship, Parcells spoke of his meeting with Jacksonville coach Tom Coughlin long after Sunday's game. He saw his close friend and former assistant in the parking lot at Giants Stadium.

"He said, 'Do you believe my guy trying to lateral?' And I said, 'Did you see our guy not covering at the half?' And he said, 'Did you believe our guy trying to run out of the end zone?' We both said that is what the kids do nowadays."

The kids Parcells is coaching have given him much satisfaction, which he readily admits. Of course, Parcells is putting more and more time into getting the best out of them. "You have your own things that elevate your standards and you try to go on to the next thing," he said. "Or else you will have others elevating your standards."

"This is a different era in football," he said. "Every industry in our society has changed a

lot, they are more transient.

It is not unlike what is typical of industry in this country, and people are going to change jobs. It is unfair to compare what was before. Before free agency, you could develop players. The teams in those days, hardly anyone coaching one team knew anybody coaching the other team. You really didn't know the people, and now you have so much more interaction. I don't think it is fair to compare."

"I go back to my friend, Stump Michael," he said of the former baseball general manager, "and that advice he gave me is as good as any I got. It is not about getting a superstar here and there, but about putting together a team so you needs are met, not the public's needs or the media's needs."

He could probably use some rest, but that won't be coming for awhile. So he plows on, brightened a bit by the Jets' impressive accomplishments just two years after going 1-15. And three months after beginning the season 0-2.

Back then, did he think a spot in the AFC title game possible? "No," he admitted. "I didn't even know if the next week would be possible."

1550 من الأصل

Mac. TA in action



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Aussies win



Page 18

Sports Editors: Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

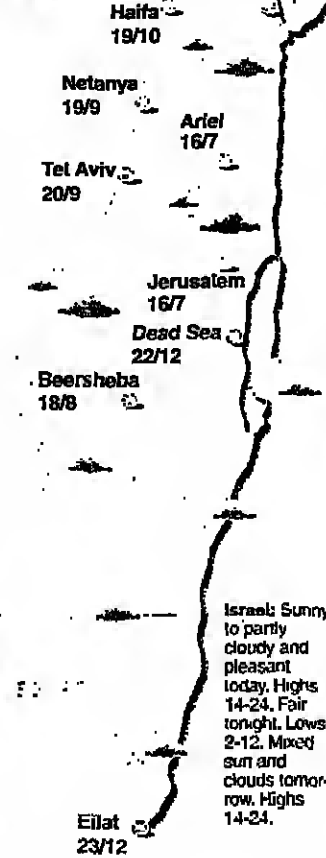
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Beer Sheva	16/61 74/43	16/61 54/43
Dead Sea	22/71 125/33	22/71 115/23
Elat	23/73 125/33	22/71 105/23
Haifa	18/66 105/33	16/61 105/23
Jerusalem	16/61 74/43	15/59 54/43
Katzen	17/62 43/33	17/62 43/33
Netanya	18/66 94/33	19/66 103/23
Tel Aviv	20/68 94/33	19/66 103/23
Tiberias	20/68 84/33	21/70 74/43

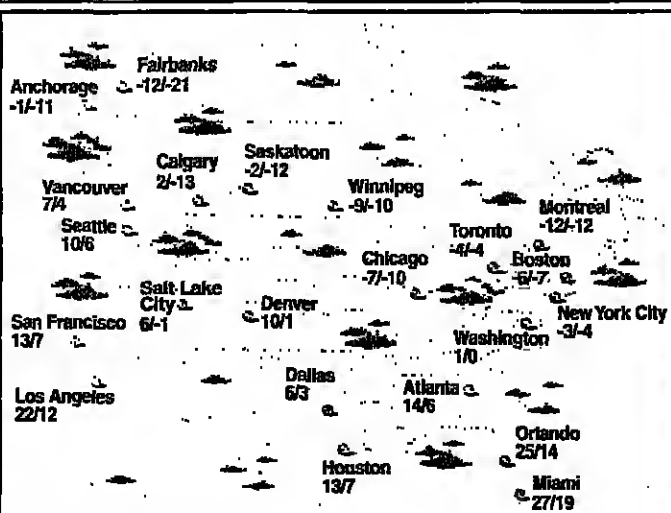
INTERNATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Friday
Amsterdam	4/39 23/53	7/44 64/33
Beijing	-1/31 -9/16	5/41 -7/23
Berlin	3/37 32/23	3/37 37/23
Buenos Aires	4/39 104/33	5/43 64/33
Caracas	20/68 105/33	21/70 115/23
Chicago	1/29 -10/15	3/37 -10/15
Frankfurt	0/32 -9/27	2/35 13/23
Hong Kong	19/66 15/59	16/61 13/55
Johns Harbor	23/73 166/43	23/73 166/43
London	5/41 43/33	6/43 43/33
Los Angeles	22/71 125/33	22/71 125/33
Mexico City	21/70 43/33	17/62 43/33
Monterrey	12/11 -12/11	2/29 -7/23
Moscow	-3/27 -5/24	-1/21 -22/29
New York	3/37 32/23	3/37 37/23
Paris	6/43 32/23	4/39 37/23
Prague	-1/31 -4/25	-1/31 -13/13
Rio de Janeiro	23/73 166/43	23/73 166/43
Rome	10/50 37/23	13/55 43/33
Sydney	23/73 166/43	23/73 166/43
Taipei	6/43 32/23	4/39 37/23
Toronto	-2/25 -4/25	4/39 13/23
Vancouver	2/35 32/23	2/35 37/23
Warsaw	-1/31 -4/25	-1/31 -13/13
Washington	1/29 -10/15	3/37 -10/15
Zurich	1/29 -10/15	3/37 -10/15

MOON PHASES

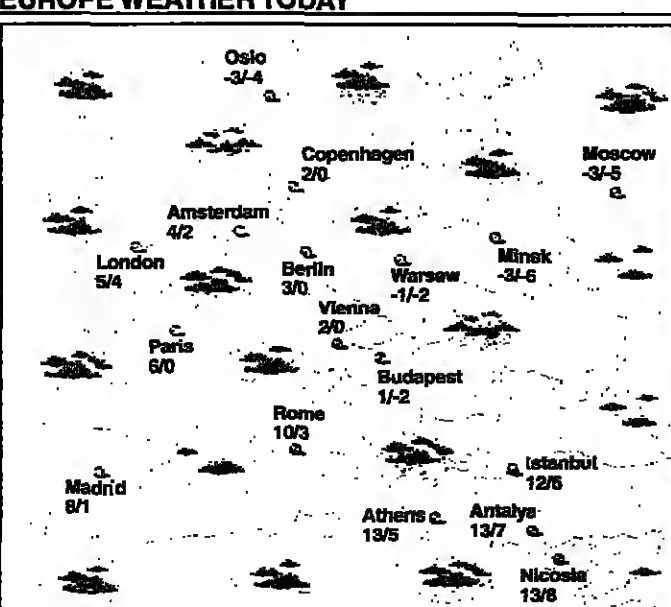
Now	First	Full	Last
Jan 17	Jan 24	Jan 31	Feb 6

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Weekend

Jordan leaves lessons for basketball

By GARY HILL

NEW YORK (Reuters) — What can be learned from the career of Michael Jordan?

He has long been presented as the ultimate athlete role model, but what is the legacy he leaves to his sport and the world outside basketball? The incandescent images of his greatest moments on the court began playing and replaying on television as soon as word started filtering out that basketball's greatest star ever would announce his retirement yesterday.

The world relived a thousand times all those shining memories: the final steal and championship-winning shot of his career, the soaring slam dunks, the unblockable jump shot, the tongue-wagging, the famous shrug that said tonight he just could not miss.

Few players seeking to learn from his example can have anything close to his pure athleticism, but that is not what made him transcendently great.

Not a natural jump shooter, it wasn't until he went beyond his high-flying dunking style and learned to create shots for himself and his teammates that his Chicago Bulls started winning NBA titles — six in two three-ring clusters this decade, interrupted only by a dabble in baseball.

Electrifying young players like Allen Iverson and Kobe Bryant seem only to have learned to copy his flash so far, not his basketball intelligence, not his dedication to physical fitness, not his steely will to win.

The most lucrative attraction in NBA history, he leaves his league struggling to win back fans after a damaging labor war.

The only silver lining may be that while all the world was a Michael Jordan fan, now hardcore fans in every city can feel their teams finally have a chance to win a championship.

Other players have said they wanted him to come back but they may privately feel as Denver Nuggets guard Nick Van Exel describes



THE FINAL CURTAIN — Michael Jordan smiles during his press conference yesterday.

them: "They would love to see him on the court but they wouldn't want to see him win another championship."

Jordan also leaves the Bulls, the only NBA team he ever played for, in a shambles.

Center Luc Longley probably also spoke for former teammates and fel-

low free agents Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman, among others, when he said Jordan's retirement would probably have a negative effect on the chances of his returning to the Bulls.

Chicago had only four signed players with just 2 1/2 weeks left to field a team.

Outside his sport, Jordan was also the ultimate winner, becoming a global icon — a phenomenon which he claimed to find baffling.

So handsome he made baldness cool, he was once reckoned by Fortune magazine to have generated \$10 billion in the world economy. He amassed a personal fortune esti-

mated at half a billion dollars by becoming the ultimate pitchman for the world's most image-conscious corporations.

Conservative in his lifestyle, he was said to have transcended "sex and politics." He was rarely tabbed by bad publicity and he never espoused a controversial cause, though NFL great Jim Brown has said he hopes Jordan will use his prominence in retirement to work for social change.

He deflected to Nike, corporate parent of "Air Jordans," accusations that child sweatshops made his line of sneakers, and he resented questions about his gambling.

Jordan always argued that gambling was legal. What, he asked, was the big deal if a tiny percentage of his enormous wealth went to pay off unsavory types for losses on the golf course?

His father, James, said Jordan did not have a gambling problem, he had a competitiveness problem. Competitiveness may still be the 10-time scoring champion's most telling trait.

He was known to humiliate teammates in practice and he was accused of forming friendships with opponents in order to gain a competitive edge.

Although supremely intelligent on court, before the media and perhaps in the corporate boardroom, Jordan publicly revealed few signs of introspection until his return in the spring of 1995 from his one season-plus experiment in baseball.

Then he began to discuss how the years had passed his character had deepened, especially after the murder of his father, to whom he was very close, and after his humiliating failure in minor league baseball, where he grew to admire his no-hope teammates who played simply for the love of the game.

As his prodigious talents took him to unforeseen access to the hidden levers of fame and corridors of power, he always remained himself, so Elvis in decline, always confident and always resourceful. He went out on top, as he always said he wanted to, with a perfect storybook ending.

Rozin, Roth-Shahamrov get Israel Prize

By ORI LEWIS

Veteran basketball coach Yehoshua Rozin and Esther Roth-Shahamrov were yesterday named as winners of the Israel Prize for sports for 1999.

Rozin, at 80, is widely regarded as the doyen of Israeli basketball coaches and has earned the nickname "Mr. Basketball."

He was instrumental in turning Maccabi Tel Aviv into one of the powerhouses of European basketball.

Roth-Shahamrov, 47, an outstanding sprinter in the 'seventies, represented Israel at the 1972 and 1976 Olympics. In Montreal in 1976, she became the first Israeli athlete to reach an Olympic final where she finished sixth in the 100 meters hurdles.

In Munich in 1972, she pulled out of the Games following the massacre of 11 of her colleagues including her coach, Amitzur Shapira.

The prizes will be awarded on Independence Day.

Swansea, Fulham savour FA Cup upsets

LONDON (Reuters) — Third division Swansea and second division Fulham pulled off memorable English FA Cup upsets last night by beating premier league opponents West Ham and Southampton respectively in third round replays.

Martin Thomas sent Swansea through 1-0 with a 26th minute shot to the left of West Ham goalkeeper Shaka Hislop at the Vetch Field. Swansea, who conceded a 90th minute equalizer in the original tie, now play premier league Derby County.

Fulham's Barry Hayles crashed the ball into the Southampton net from close range seven minutes from time before 17,000 cheering fans at Craven Cottage for a 1-0 win.

The victory completed the Londoners' impressive cup double over the struggling premier league side. They also knocked Southampton out of the League Cup 2-1 on aggregate in September.

Minor league Rushden and Diamonds gave premier league Leeds a scare in their replay at Elland Road, taking the lead in the 11th minute through Carl Hogg.

But two goals by teenager Alan Smith, one in each half, and a third by Dutch striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink put the visitors firmly back in their place and gave Leeds a 3-1 win.

They now travel to first division survivors Portsmouth.

Revised draw for the fourth round of the English Football Association (FA) Cup (I denotes first division, II second, III third): Saturday, January 23: Sheffield Wednesday v Blackpool County (I) Bristol Rovers (II) v Leyton Orient (III) Wrexham (III) v Huddersfield Town (I) Portsmouth (I) v Leeds United Sheffield United (I) or Notts County (II) v Cardiff (III) Swindon (I) or Barnsley (II) v Bournemouth (II) Newcastle United Bradford City (II) Leicester City v Coventry City Aston Villa v Fulham (II) Blackburn Rovers v Sunderland (I) Swansea (III) v Derby County Walsley v Tottenham Hotspur Everton v Ipswich Town (I) Sunday, January 24: Manchester United v Liverpool Wolverhampton Wanderers (I) v Arsenal Monday, January 25: Oxford United (I) v Chelsea

Wembley sale clears way for new national stadium

LONDON (Reuters) — Wembley Plc, owner of Wembley Stadium, said yesterday it had agreed to sell the venue for £103 million (\$169 million) in a move which clears the way for the reconstruction of the home of English soccer.

Wembley Plc plans to sell the ground, opened in 1923, to the English National Stadium Development Co Ltd, a subsidiary of the English Football Association. A National Lottery grant has been made available to fund the deal.

The new owners will demolish the existing stadium and redevelop the site in north-west London as a new national stadium for the staging of soccer, rugby, athletics and other sports and events. The project is expected to cost upwards of £250

million and a new stadium is a key part of England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup.

Wembley Stadium, with its famous twin towers, is the most evocative venue in the English game, having played host to England's 1966 World Cup triumph and staging the annual showpiece FA Cup final.

British Sports Minister Tony Banks welcomed the news and said he hoped the new stadium would be ready in time to stage the 2003 World Athletics championships if London is selected as the host city. He said the stadium would seat between 85,000 and 90,000 spectators.

"Now we know it is secure we can go into the last 12 months (of the

bidding period) on a high," said Banks.

"Now we are ready to move pretty fast. There is a great deal of national pride and prestige behind it."

However, the decision to go-ahead with the sale agreement, which still requires shareholder approval, caused a boardroom split at owners Wembley Plc.

The sale was approved on the casting vote of the chairman after three non-executive directors "strongly opposed" the deal.

The agreement comes against the backdrop of a £228 million takeover offer for Wembley Plc tabled last week by ENIC Plc, a leisure company which has recently taken controlling stakes in a number of European soccer clubs.

Yachtswomen still hopeful for world medal

By HEATHER CHAIT

Israel's women sailors Shani Kedmi and Anat Fabrikant are still holding out for a medal at the world sailing championships in Melbourne, despite slipping to second place overall yesterday.

After five sails in the 470-Olympic class, the Israelis relinquished their first place to the Danish team of sisters Susanne and Michaela Ward whom they trail by six points.

Five points behind the Israelis is the Italian duo of Federica Salva and Emanuela Sossi.

Yesterday's 25-knot wind and huge waves led to the third race being abandoned but earlier in the day Kedmi and Fabrikant finished

in 13th and second places in the fourth and fifth races respectively.

Heartening news yesterday came from two Israeli men's teams in the same category.

Eli Zuckerman and Elad Ronen improved their overnight result of seventh place to nab the fifth spot after six races.

Their placings yesterday were 6.11 and 15 for a total of 44 points, way behind the Benoit Petit and Francois Cuzon team from France with just nine points.

In eighth place, the cutoff point for the 2000 Olympics, are Nir and Ran Shental who shifted up eight berths with results of 3.13 and 7.

Zeev Kalach and David Schwartz dropped from 25th to 27th place.

Charlton: Rivals afraid of English World Cup bid

CANNES (Reuters) — Sir Bobby Charlton said yesterday that rival candidates were afraid of the English campaign to host the 2006 World Cup.

At an informal news conference at the Football Expo trade fair, Charlton said that England would prove it had the best bid when FIFA's 24-member executive committee meets to vote in March next year.

"We have no divine right to stage the tournament," said Charlton. "But what we have are safe grounds, no fences, and no major police presence."

Although England hosted the European Championships in 1996 Charlton stressed

that the country had not hosted the world's premier competition since 1966, when he appeared in England's victorious team.

"I hear things from our rivals, from Germany and South Africa, about why the World Cup should not come to England," said Charlton. "But the one thing that is consistent is that every time a statement comes out from one of our competitors about the World Cup, they invariably mention England."

"Why is that? It is because they are afraid of us. They respect the strength of our bid for the things that we can offer." Sir Geoff Hurst, the other main ambassador of England's cam-

paign, denounced the so-called gentleman's agreement, first discussed back in 1993, to give the 2006 World Cup to Germany in exchange for England hosting Euro 96.

"It is an insult to some of the other competitors hoping to have the World Cup that 13 years before the competition, a number of people in a smoke-filled room can decide off the cuff who to back. That idea is inconceivable," said Hurst, who scored a hat-trick in the 1966 final.

Hurst also expressed complete confidence that the recent resignations of chairman Keith Wiseman and chief executive Graham Kelly from the English FA would have no bearing

whatsoever on the English bid.

"The bid is not about one or two personalities," he said.

"It is about a strong team making a bid for the country as a whole. I see it as a small bump on a long, tough road. We've almost forgotten about it already."

Charlton said no-one from outside Britain had expressed the slightest concern about the demise of Wiseman and Kelly in relation to 2006. "It does not affect the bid one iota in the context of the world and that's the opinion of the FIFA delegates who matter."

Also bidding for 2006 are Nigeria, Ghana, Morocco, Egypt and Brazil.